

*AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT: AN INVESTIGATION INTO  
AUDIENCE INTEREST IN THEATRE IN THE INNERCITY  
OF JOHANNESBURG.*



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*A RESEARCH REPORT PRESENTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF THE  
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*Declaration*

*I hereby declare the following:*

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Historical view of Theatre in South Africa**

*“There was a terrible conspiracy of silence in the country. Theatre gave me the opportunity to speak about things that people did not want to talk about or see. Conversely, for the people who have being muddled by that oppression, theatre was one of the only ways of expressing their anger, despair, and hope. There was also a rallying point. It kept alive an awareness of values- the dignity of all human beings, regardless of skin colour or gender, and values of free speech”*

Athol Fugard

The history of theatre in South Africa draws back from the time of the apartheid era, which encompasses a type of theatre such as protest theatre. Research states that, “the African theatre began with the 1<sup>st</sup> European-inspired dramatic performance in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Kavanagh, 1985: 43).” Similarly to Kavanagh, the Media Club South Africa (2014) states that, “originally, white South African theatre was heavily influenced by 20<sup>th</sup> century missionaries, who made an important contribution to a tradition of theatre when introduced drama in education. Their themes were not only staged versions of biblical teachings but also didactic plays located in South Africa (Media Club South Africa, 2014).” Furthermore, “in 1920s and 1930s, theatre began to flourish in black townships where performance arts increasingly became popular (Media Club South Africa, 2014).”

During the time of the apartheid era, “theatre was an important resistance to apartheid in South Africa because the white minority population dominated the main forms of commercial theatre. As a result, popular theatre movement emerged to accommodate and meets the needs of majority of people (mostly black people) (Rivenburg, 2013).” In other words, Apartheid restricted black people to attend theatre where white people attend and white people were restricted to attend theatre with black people.

Before this paper can further elaborate more on the history of theatre and its functions during the apartheid era, it is important to understand what we mean by the word “theatre.” Cassady (as quoted by Akashoro et al., 2010), view theatre as an activity that gives audience the view of themselves.

*“Theatre” is imagination, emotions and intellects which embrace the world cultures and perspectives that answers question, predicts our tomorrow, and mirrors our today”.*

“Theatre is also referred to be a complicated past-time, bridging the fields of arts and leisure and the driver of aesthetics, hedonics, emotions, education, and entertainment (Walmsley, 2011).

Drawing back to the history of theatre, we understand from the above definitions that theatre is a tool that establish and build up communication within the society, where people have a platform to express their thoughts, exercise their values, practice their cultures, and learn about each other as a society. According to Media Club South Africa (2014), “the origins of South African theatre can be found in the rich and ancient oral tradition of indigenous South Africa’s- the folk tales around the fires, with their drama, and the audience ranging from the very young to the very old. Furthermore, the formal South African theatre tradition dates back as the 1830s when Andrew Bains’s *Kaatje Kekkelbek* (Life among the Hottentots) was performed in 1938 by the Grahamstown Amateur Company (Media Club South Africa, 2014).”

In the other hand Steadman (1991:77-78) highlight that, “South African Theatre at the height of apartheid era was propelled by a motive of force, giving it an international profile which was the envy of theatre practitioners in many countries. The motive force was the reaction to apartheid. In addition, the anti-apartheid plays such as “Sizwe Banzi is dead, the island, Survival, Egoli, The hungry earth, Woza Albert, Bopha, Asinamali, and many more others- embodied the nation of “Black”, and ‘resistance” theatre (Steadman, 1991).” In the earliest of apartheid, “ Towards the end of 1950’s, Athol Fugard made his first impression in Johannesburg with his play “ *No good Friday*” which was created by a number of blacks intellectuals from Sophiatown and opened in 1985 at the Bantu Men’s Social Centre, adjacent to Dorkay House. Moreover, in 1950s “Fugard opened a small theatre with his wife which was called the Circle player. He went on to work with some of the well-known South African playwrights: John Kani and Winston Ntshona, whom he created Sizwe Banzi is Dead and the Island (Media Club South Africa, 2014).

According to the history of theatre in South Africa, it is justified that theatre has being in existence for decade concerning its origin, its form and its function as a medium of human communication, development and expression. Even though there were many political issues that divided people in terms of theatre participation, a number of South African playwrights joined forces to create theatre that was meaningful and that sought to address social, economic and political issues. Playwrights such, Athol Fugard, John Kani and many more gave theatre a name and made theatre in the past to be debatable through their plays as they challenged the situations that were taking place in that time.

However, in the year 1947, “national theatre that was formed did not allow blacks to participate creatively even though it showcased indigenous Afrikaans plays, only five of more than 40 plays performed in English were by South Africa. Unlike theatre in the apartheid era, theatre today allows for creative participation for both white and blacks (Media Club South Africa, 2014).” With this being the case, there seem to be a low theatre participation in South African theatre. As a result, Walmsley (2011) explains the complexity of lack of insight that we possess into audience motivation for going to theatre”. While some audiences find pleasure in attending theatre, others perceive no reason to attend at all.

To this effect, Walmsley (2011) helps us understand audience motives behind attending theatre.

*“Audience attend the theatre, to feel part of a special community of interest, to be ethically challenged, to be engaged, to learn about history or current issues, to be intellectually challenged, to be entertained, and to escape from their everyday care” (Walmsley, 2011).*

However, not every theatre production is able to fulfil or meet the needs of the audience. Consequently, this research report sought to look into the gap and differences in people’s interest in theatre in the South African context.

## **1.1 Background of the study**

While theatre in South Africa is described as a buzzing scene with many cultural activities to offer, it has being observed that there is a gap in theatre attendance (Citysearchblog). Recent research shows that 65% of people in South Africa do not know that theatre exists; they have never seen a theatre performance (Hardie, 2011). Despite the fact that there is a vibrant theatre



culture in South Africa for those who actively participate in it, it was observed that only a small group of privileged people, black and white have access and; are able to enjoy theatre. Analogous to Hardie (2011), a research by the Business of Art South Africa (2011) of attendance in Arts and Culture events showed that South Africans go to the theatre on average from 1.3 to 1.5 times a year, while 42% to 54% of the different groups said they never go to theatre shows. It goes further on highlighting that people attend theatre shows on an average of 2.5 to 3.2 times per year (BASA Artstrack, 2011). This shows that audience attendance in South African theatre is decreasing everyday despite the government policies and theatre initiatives that seek to develop Audiences and broader participation in the arts industry. As a result, it has become significant for this study to find reasons concerning the decline in theatre attendance.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Both reliable and anecdotal evidence suggest that audiences attending theatre in South Africa has declined over the years (Hardie and BASA, 2011). Graver (1999) points out that the end of apartheid has reduced interest among South African theatres at large, while the continuing high rate of crime in the country makes audiences reluctant to risk attending evening performances. This is acute, especially in Johannesburg where there are still signs (i.e. mugging) of crime for audience to risk attending late night theatre performances. According to Scollen (2008), many non- theatregoers enjoy theatre when the threats or risks associated with theatre attendance are removed or omitted. This has in turn raised concerns over what needs to be done to develop “*in attendance*” audiences. Although much literature based on theatre in South Africa, little research has been conducted on audience motivations and audience development in Johannesburg.

## **1.3 Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this research paper is to investigate audience’s motivation in attending theatre in Johannesburg, South Africa. The study is intended to contribute to the broader knowledge in understanding theatre attenders and non- attenders; that is what motivates them to attend theatre or lack interest to attend theatre.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

The main research question in this research is what motivates audiences into attending theatre performances in Johannesburg, South Africa?

In exploring this research question, the following guiding questions were used to frame the scope of the research:

- Why do people go to the theatre?
- What guides audience decisions to attend theatre shows?
- What motivates audience decisions not to attend theatre shows?
- What is the view/state of theatre shows in Johannesburg?
- What are the factors that create a gap between theatre programmes and the target audience?
- How does audience participation affect theatre programmes?
- How effective have the government policies on theatre be on audience development?
- What is the impact of theatre in terms of constructing change in the society/community?
- What can be done to ensure that there is synergy between audiences and theatres?

## **1.5 Importance of Study**

This study is important because it fills the knowledge gap in audience motivations for attending theatre performances, as well as adding to the body of knowledge on audience development and theatre management in South Africa, specifically in Johannesburg. This study provides important information that encourages better understanding of theatre shows, theatre audiences and audience development, in order to add value and benefit to both theatre audience and organizations. Given that, little research has documented reasons for audience motivation in theatre and the effectiveness of South African theatres in promoting audience attendance in theatre performances it has become important for the study to fill in the gaps that emerges.

The findings of the study will contribute towards solutions for understanding the gap between the works of theatre and audience development programmes. Once the gap is understood, possible solutions for building audiences, audience development models and approaches are suggested to assist shape theatre organizations to develop strategies for building their audiences. It is hoped that artists, managers, and theatre organizations will benefit from the findings of the report in order to improve their practices.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

Audience development is not a new phenomenon given that substantial research has been conducted to come up with different concerns about it. The purpose of this section is to assess the different literatures by researchers who have contributed to the broader knowledge in the field of Theatre Audience Development. This review will aid our understanding of theatre audience development in South Africa. Search strings used in putting together the Literature review are from the University of the Witwatersrand Database, Theatres attendances, Audience development, and audience interest in theatre performances. The literature sourced has been past to current, with the bulk sourced from the past five years. This review is not exhaustive of all issues, but brings into perspective some of the key themes and arguments around audience development and audience motivations in theatre attendance.

##### 2.1.1 Understanding Theatre and what it does

During the process of conducting this research, it has being discovered that despite the origin and years of theatre existence all over the world, there are still some people who have no idea what theatre is, and who also get the wrong impression of what theatre entails as a medium. As a result, it has then become important to share the knowledge of what theatre is and what it is about as a medium.

First and foremost, the word Theatre is derived from a Greek origin '*theatron*', meaning '*a place of seeing*', which can be described in its most elementary form as 'a space set apart', a "place of representation" ( Zarybnicka & Boal as cited in Inge 2008). Besides its original meaning, many scholars describe or define theatre in different ways to emphasize its meaning and its role in a broader field. Joffe and Newton (2007) encapsulate theatre as a tool of addressing issues of life. Both authors state:

*Theatre as an activity that deals with core issues of life in both the production of works and the purpose built venues that house them. That it is also about ceremony, community, change, imagination and stories (Joffe and Newton, 2007)*

Contrary, Kleberg (1993), however, states that [...]

*Theatre is an art form that is complex. It is also a theatrical performance that includes a number of factors which the director combines to communicate his overall vision or meaning to the audience. In addition, theatre is made up of factors or elements that derive from other art forms, such as music, painting, literature, and so on (Kleberg, 1993).*

Many people mistaken theatre with other art forms that leads to the definition to be defined falsely. According to Cassady (1982), theatre can be distinguished from many of the other arts because it exists only for a period. More than anything else, “a production or actions can never be witnessed again once the final action or line on stage is performed (Cassady, 1982).” As a result, theatre differs from painting, sculpture, literature, and architecture. Theatre is also defined “as a form of imitating human experience by allowing the audience to identify with the characters that are presented as real. It does more by imitating life through the efforts of many people, encompassing not only various viewpoints, but also many forms of art (Cassady, 1982).” This form include “architecture in the setting, sculpture in three- dimensional forms and the use of lights, and shadow, dance in the planned movements (blocking), painting in the setting and make-up, literature in the words, and music in songs and the flow of the language” (Cassady, 1982).

“Theatre is a place where people come together to share intense feelings, ideas, and experiences (Smiley, 1931).” It connects people to real life issues and allows them to share their real life experience, thereby forcing them to confront their social problems. Nonetheless, Roberts (1971) defines “theatre as a mirror that holds up to nature and shows us the complicated, contradictory, joyful and sorrowing things that we are, as well as the pattern of tensions between hopes and fears that constitutes human life, the inward and outward conflicts that accompany and comprise human existence (Roberts, 1971).”

### 2.1.2 What theatre does: Theatre for transformation

According to Mda (1995), “the notion of the art playing a role either in socialization or transformation is not a new one in Africa.” He outlines that, “In a pre-colonial Africa art did not only “mean” it also “functioned.” This was before the commoditization, which came with westernization. Art was part of the common festival, and all members of the society, among other activities, participated in its production and enjoyment (Mda, 1995).” Mda goes further in stating, “Some of the art reinforced the values of the society, and socialized the young into the culture of the people. For instance, the narrative theatre that was performed by a single actor who assumed the different roles of all the characters in the play, which was known as the “*Inganekwane*” by Amazulus, *Itshomi* by AmaXhosa, and *Tshoma* by Basotho (Mda, 1995).”

*“Theatre carries other subjects, history, culture, sociology, psychology, and politics. Moreover, through a confrontation with the audience, lures them towards a form of judgment, a valued evaluation and assessment of situations, and ethical abstraction of thought which helps to effect changes or points towards social changes within a given society (Adeniji, 2010).”*

In addition, Mohamed (2014) stipulates that, “Theatre created during the apartheid era was volatile and edgy. Artists spoke of truth to power. Theatre opened up windows for discussions about the South African society and in some way provoked a discussion within the societies.” Mohamed further outline that, “Theatre agitated for social and political change (Mahomed, 2014).”

Theatre in South Africa strived to address change, development, and transformation. According to Mda, theatre did more than just entertain people, but it addressed issues of social, political, and economical agendas that affected the people. It sought to bring transformation to the society by allowing the society to express themselves via theatrical performances. Before 1994 (the post-apartheid era), in 1974 “theatre activities were in the process of transformation.” It was this period of increased militancy, and raised political consciousness (Kavanagh, 1985).” However, in the past “there was unemployment for young black people.” With this being an issue, “Theatre provided them with a semi-professional independent alternative. Theatre offered them with a platform to earn a living and also express their feelings through performance concerning what

and how they felt about their shared oppression and what they considered should be done about it (Kavanagh, 1985).”

Contrary to the above statements concerning theatre for transformation in the apartheid era, it is assumed that theatre in the post-apartheid era is struggling with transformation. Steadman (1991) states that, “South Africa after apartheid needs to generate new conventions. Theatre needs to be examined in terms of both the changing face of apartheid and rapidly changing relation of power which determine cultural practice in South Africa (Steadman, 1991).” Theatre in the new South Africa needs transformation in order to bring about change in the societies we are live in today. There is a lot to be done in terms of bringing change. Perhaps there need to be new conventions that require the involvement of members in the community in various sectors of community development. Unlike the time of apartheid where audiences were restricted to express themselves about issues that affect them, in the post-apartheid audiences have rights to freedom of expression; which allows them to address issues that affect them. This is a positive way to encourage them to confront issues about their communities.

### **2.1.3 Theatre for development**

“Theatre is the only art form in which the whole human being is actually employed as an instrument for expressing or investigating the human condition. One of the strength of theatre is its ability to portray and conflicting opinions in a relatively straightforward fashion. In effect, it can present a microcosm of the world by having different characters represent different and conflicting positions. This personalizes, and often clarifies the debate (Article19, 2003:6).” According Article19 (2003:3) “Theatre for development is a form of popular theatre often used by non-Government organization or community based organization to promote social goals. It normally involves the community and it serves as an educational tool to facilitate the development of the community.”

In an African context, Abah (cited in Harding, 2002: 159) outlines, “theatre for development has come widely accepted in Africa and other parts of the developing world as a theatre of the ordinary people used to address their own problems, in their own terms, from their own

perspectives and from within their own art forms. It uses the indigenous performance forms of the people to define the aesthetics of its operation.” She adds that, “in the agenda of change, the progression of theatre for development begins with what Paulo Freire (1972:52) has called “problem posing” education to raise critical awareness. The development of critical awareness is critical to the practice of theatre for development because for most time it is lack of knowledge that prevailing circumstances of their lives can, should be, different which keeps the ordinary person marginalized (Abah, cited in Harding, 2002:160).”

In addition, Article19 (2003:4) suggests, “Theatre process is often based on an analysis of Paulo Freire’s pedagogical process of conscientisation where the community involve in voicing its concerns and discovering solutions to problems.” The pedagogical processes are outlined as follows:

- **Group building and sharing-** This process entails that “facilitators establishes a rapport with the community and help to build an atmosphere of trust through a channel of sharing games and songs”
- **Research and information gathering-** In order to understand issues the community go through, this process suggest that there is a need for research, “however the kind of research needed is participatory research involving the combination of storytelling, theatre exercises, and open discussion.”
- **Problem analysis and prioritization-** during this process “All participants, especially the members of the community, get involved in determining which issues are the most important to focus on, what their root causes are, and so on.”
- **Scenario building-** ideas/issues that were selected are transformed and turned into a dramatic form. These issues are then taken, rehearsed and put on stage for the audience to experience.
- **Evaluation and planning for follow-up actions-** this process form part of the last process of seeing if action taken brought about change (Article19, 2003:4).

In support to the above process, it is assumed that the “Paulo Freire’s Processes can be generated in participatory theatre, which is essential for theatre for development in that it contribute to the audience’s rights to communicate, as it gives voice to those who otherwise have difficulty



making their views about certain issues heard. Furthermore, it can help communities to articulate common positions around issues that affect them (Article19, 2003:4).”

Theatre for development helps people to see things or issues in a different perspective and it is through changed perspectives about issues that affect the society that a community could walk towards development. Abah (cited in Harding, 2002:160) writes, “Within the discourse of theatre for development, theatre functions on several levels and in different dimensions. It provides a forum for a community to discuss the issues and problems in their lives.” In Abah’s words, “theatre is an occasion in which the village may come together for communal entertainment. It is a medium through which individuals and the community can recreate themselves (Harding, 2002).” In this case, theatre for development is not only concerned with the development of the society, it is also concerned with individual’s personal development by offering them a platform to see their lives through performance and challenge them to recreate themselves; in a way that brings change in their lives. In other words, Theatre for development is community-centred or audience-centered in that it mirrors the lives of the community so that they can view themselves and learn to take responsibility of their lives by initiating change or transformation.

## **2.2 Understanding audience**

Schosser (cited in Suonsyrja, 2007) defines the term “audience as customers involved in a transaction with an artist or art institution. He further stresses that audiences are those with whom the arts organizations is trying to exchange something of value.” According to Suonsyrja (2007), audience consists of primary and secondary audiences. “Primary audiences are those who already attend or could attend and thus, secondary audiences are the other stakeholders such as funding bodies (Suonsyrja, 2007) .” Hayes and Slater (2002) demonstrate that there are different groups of audiences, which are existing audience, switchers, attenders elsewhere, intenders, the indifferent and the hostiles.

Firstly, Hayes and Slater (2002) define *Existing audiences* “as a group of audience mostly known by the organization and who visits the organization more often. Within this group, it is then said that the behaviours and attitudes tend to be different and depend on a variety of structural,

emotional and intellectual factors.” Secondly, “the ‘*Switchers*’”, however, are then characterized by attendance at a variety of arts events and venues that may have varying degrees of loyalty to range of organizations. In the same way, the behaviours of ‘switchers,’ could have similarities with existing audience; because this group comprises discrete sub-sectors with markedly different motivational characteristics (Hayes & Slater, 2002).”

Thirdly, “*Attendees elsewhere*” are defined “as those who have never attended the organization’s venue and are currently serviced by other arts providers.” Fourthly, in accordance to ‘*Intenders*’, Hill and O’Sullivan (quoted in Hayes and Slater, 2002) defined “intenders as the kind of audience who think that the arts are a “good” thing and like the idea of attending, but never seem to get around to it. They emphasize that their lack of attendance is primarily due to structural characteristics such as life-stage (family commitments); economics (lack of disposable income); competing time pressure; location and distance to travel (an important factor for rural communities) (Hayes & Slater, 2002).”

Fifthly, Hill and O’Sullivan (quoted in Hayes and Slater, 2002) states “that “*indifferent*” group is those who have no strong opinions on the arts and no strong desire to attend either. Finally, the “*hostiles*” group is said to be similar in some ways to the ‘indifferent’ group except that they have consciously adopted a negative position. Certainly, this maybe as a result of previous negative experiences or in response to perceptions and self-image accrued over time (Hayes and Slater, 2002).”

Generally, “theatre’s most significant aspect is human presence (Smiley, 1931); in other words, for theatre to exist there has to be an audience to appreciate the performance.” Freshwater (2009) adds that the presence of the audience is central to the definition of theatre. In the other hand, Smiley (1931) emphasize that for “theatre to happen, more than one person must be present. As a result, understanding audiences is the most important part of audience development in building successful theatre organization.” Walzl (2006) argues that understanding audiences is about being audience-centered rather than product-led and being audience-centered than product-led requires a profound understanding of visitors and non- visitors with respect to their nature, motivations, expectations and needs.

The Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) explains the importance of knowing your existing audiences and potential audiences, identifying their needs and motivations, and understanding where things could be improved. Understanding audiences is the first step in delivering a better experience and building participation. Moreover, it means “diving in researching about their geographical and demographic details, this include their lifestyles, gender, race, their behaviours and attitude (HLF, 2010).”

## **2.3 Theatre in South African Perspective**

In South Africa, the Performing arts sector, (which includes Theatre, Dance, Music etc.) as a whole depends on public funding and private sponsorships, and as well as both public service and private/ commercial broadcasting companies (HSRC, 2007). Research conducted by (PANSA as cited in Joffe & Newton 2007) outline that there are approximately 100 theatres in South Africa, offering 35 shows per year. Half of 50 % are privately owned; the three spheres of government support 30 %, and 20% are located within educational institutions (Newton and Joffe, 2007).

Theatre in South Africa has relevance to and resonances with drama in many parts of the world (Graver, 1999). According to Graver (1999), it deserves continued attention for its innovative variety of hybrid dramatic forms rich in vivid languages, forceful performance styles and incisive social functions.

Given the number of theatres in South Africa and its relevance towards social change, “a number of significant issues face South African theatre today. These are identified in various and intersecting ways, but broadly address questions of relevance, societal challenges and changes, funding structures, enabling policy and leadership abilities (HSRC, 2007).”

### **2.3.1 The view of theatres in Johannesburg**

In Johannesburg, theatres are seen as one that are ‘buzzing with innovative, indigenous theatre, telling the stories of post-apartheid in South Africa with passion and energy, accompanied by vibrant dancing and singing (‘Joburg’s Sizzling Theatre Scene, 2013). “In recent years, new

theatres opened up to the public in Johannesburg. Theatres such as the Alexandra theatre in Braamfontein, Umoja's Victory theatre in Orange Grove, and the Teatro at Montecasino, which hosted *The Lion King* in 2007 (Media Club South Africa, 2014).” To add into the newly opened “theatres, the popular theatres include the Market Theatre in Newtown, which is seen as one of “the city’s most established and respected spaces; - a home for different brave productions of a more liberated South Africa. It forms part of the Newtown inner city cultural precinct, recently redeveloped as an exciting hive for arts, culture, and entertainment. The Joburg Theatre in Braamfontein offers more mainstream fare; - for its vibrancy and its sizzle, it is usually booked a year in advance in local and overseas productions, often on their third or fourth run in the city (Citysearchblog).”

It is inside these theatres that plays are hosted and performances displayed on stage for the audience to see and appreciate. The Media Club South Africa (2014) states, “Some of the plays that are hosted are still raw, angry and ragged, however, now they encompass themes that would, in the earlier years, have not been considered irrelevant. Themes that include love, religion, family, violence, homosexuality, drugs, and more are explored in works that engage and involve the audiences (Media Club South Africa, 2014).” They further emphasize, “A play such as *Woza Albert*, evoked the same hilarity and recognition as the original, even though young audience lacked personal memory of its frame of reference (Media Club South Africa, 2014).” According to Mohamed (2014), “from the early 80ties and mid-nineties, Newtown was a magnet for cultural trendsetters and intellectuals. It was a melting point where art and the mind intersected (Mahomed, 2014).” Mohamed adds, “Many artistic marriages were consummated in Newtown and it gave birth to wonderful initiatives. For instance, South Africa’s leading contemporary dance festival “dance umbrella, which is one of the famous dance festival born in the apartheid era (Mahomed, 2014).”

To support the statement above, theatre today is blossoming in different venues within the inner city of Johannesburg and there are different kinds of theatre productions and theatre events that happen in and out of the theatres itself. Theatrical works range from street performances, restaurants performances, performances in clubs and so on. There are new theatre works produced by emerging artists and professional artists in local restaurants, bars, or clubs within the inner city of Johannesburg. For example, Within the Braamfontein area, a newly opened

restaurant called the “Vuyo’s” accommodates young emerging artist (especially Wits students) to launch and show case their work from music to poetry. In addition, within the Braamfontein area, we have “Themba Interactive- an initiative for life” which is part of the Wits Drama for life. Themba Interactive uses theatre to bring about social transformation by dealing with issues that affect the communities; issues centered on “HIV/AIDS, relationships, Domestic Violence, Sex and other social issues such as human rights (Themba Interactive, 2014).” Moreover, within the Joburg cultural precinct, Newtown, you will find the Sophiatown Bar Lounge, which gives the audience the taste of food with a mixture of classical jazz and live bands.

In addition to theatre initiatives, theatre institution such as the Market theatre lab, which is the educational division of the Market Theatre, promotes theatre through a full time theatre programme- to train young people into becoming professional theatre makers. The Market theatre lab goes beyond training young people through a theatre drama school, it involve the community through community theatre and training programmes. When interviewed on 9 July 2014, Vaughan (2014) stated that this initiative “involve sending fieldworkers to community groups around the country to work on skill development and on developing particular theatrical plays. As a result, a community festival is hosted every year for the community groups to display their theatre works (Vaughan, 2014).” The “Moving into Dance” organization in Newtown also play an important role in using dance as an instrument to facilitate learning in schools throughout the communities of Johannesburg. Their community based “Edudance outreach programmes provide a learning curve for learners in schools to enrich their intellectuals in numeracy, literacy, environmental skills, and life skills using dance and participatory learning methods.” In other words, this organization work to assist schools through learning based on the curriculum using a form of theatrical work, which is dancing (Moving into Dance, 2014).”

According to Sack (2013) in the current time, “our theatres in Johannesburg have being relevant, especially the Market theatre, the Wits theatre, even to a certain extent the Joburg theatre. There has being a lot of interesting work done in theatres in Johannesburg. There is a lot of interesting work at the Wits Theatre, and the same thing for the Market Theatre. The Wits drama students are given opportunities to direct or produce work in the Wits Theatre and a lot of interesting work has being supported by the Market theatre: young directors, new actors, new materials; some of them are quiet fundamental. However, there has being many materials produced. He

further encapsulate that theatres in Joburg has being made relevant to woman's needs, black communities, and citizens of Johannesburg in all kinds of ways. The actors, writers and the directors have come up to the challenge of introducing contents that people will engage in and that people will be interested in" (Sack, 2013)<sup>1</sup>. Even though theatre in Johannesburg is relevant and unique in its space, there is a gap widening between theatre organizations, artists and its audiences causing audiences attendance in theatres to decline.

### 2.3.2 Why people go to theatre in South Africa

Antrobus (2009:p11) outlines that there is still a debate as to what draws audience members to attend theatre in South Africa. Jeysen's online survey (as cited in Antrobus, 2009) found entertainment, art, and escapism as factors that contain clear connotation of what theatre mean to most theatre respondents in South Africa. Her online survey revealed **passion; live, fun; world and magic** as key words that prompt audience response of the meaning of theatre. Furthermore, Snowball (as cited in Antrobus, 2009) indicates that motivation for attendance in South Africa varies somewhat with age, education and jobs. Audiences with lower educational levels are seeing as being influenced by educational motives for attendance than those with higher education levels, who tend to care more about artistic quality (Antrobus, 2009). As such, it is then assumed that theatre attendance is influenced by audience understanding of what theatre is.

### 2.3.3 Why audience don't attend Art events in South Africa

In the context of Johannesburg, Sack (2013) highlights that lack of theatre attendance in Johannesburg is not due to the problem of the content. It is the fear of going out at night and lack of public transport that are the major challenges. The issue of safety of our citizens is everyone's problem and concern in Johannesburg. He emphasize that in Johannesburg we cannot define

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<sup>1</sup> Steven Sack is a former director of Arts, culture and heritage in the city of Johannesburg. He was responsible for the management of the programmes concerned with cultural life, creative industries, heritage, public art, public space and museums and galleries. He worked as a cultural activist, an artist, an art educator and an art administrator. He is the director of the Origin Centre at the University of Witwatersrand (WSAC, 2009).

ourselves as a democratic city in that we fail to show the right and freedom of movement of all the citizens. Our city discriminates against people who have no public transport, against woman and young people who are not safe in the street during the night. Consequently, he outlined that there is also too much pressure for young people of this generation to engage in theatre because of unemployment globally and too much competition for resources (Sack, The view of theatre in Johannesburg, 2013).

There are many people in Johannesburg with stories to tell that are relevant to the people. However, their capacity to bring their productions to the market is constrained because of lack of resources and facilities. They need funding from the National Art Council and Business Art South Africa- someone has to give them funding. And these are the problems that needs to be addressed in order to develop audiences in Johannesburg” (Sack, 2013).

Generally, theatres in South Africa are not located near the people, and there is lack of public transport, more especially for evening shows, hence various audience development programmes to bus in the people (Meersman, 2012). In other words, one could say that this issue serves as a factor that amount lack of theatre attendance in South Africa. Kruger (2012), emphasize that since the official end of apartheid, theatre in South Africa has lost the prominent position it enjoyed as the site of cultural resistance to the state. Theatre in the post- apartheid era has to compete with film and television for talent as well as audiences.

Moreover, Meersman (2012) writes that theatre in South Africa is economically perceived as relatively expensive. He goes on highlighting that it is a paid, ephemeral experience, you do not come out with a CD, a book in hand, a full tummy or less sober than when you went in. Despise this, he emphasize that audiences are however absent even when theatre is presented for free of charge. This perhaps may be due to an absence of familiarity, but there is a countervailing cultural aspect. His further argument put forth that African audience are voluble and they like to interact, in his case, sitting in uniform rows in the dark is culturally peculiar to them” (Meersman, 2012).

Nevertheless, whilst other South African audiences enjoy and understand theatre, there are still some audiences who do not relate and know how to experience theatre. The National Arts Council of South Africa, (Public Participation in the arts survey, 2010) found that most of the

people in South Africa appreciate the arts (theatre, dance, etc.), and believe that they contribute to personal, community and national development. However, they have no understanding of the art.

Whilst the matter of knowledge and understanding the art in South Africa appears to be contributing to lack of art attendance, there are barriers that add to lack of audience attendance in theatre events. The NAC (2010) discusses time, transport, price, languages, availability, and accessibility as barriers of none attendance in art events. For this study, time, transport, and price will be discussed as barriers for lack of theatre attendance in South Africa

## **2.4 Barriers of audience public participation in the arts**

### **2.4.4.1 Time**

The NAC survey (Public Participation in the Arts, 2010) highlights that audience pointed out they had no time to attend art and culture events.

### **2.4.4.2 Transport**

It was observed that transportation prevents audiences from participating in these events. For instance, those who do not have their own vehicles rely on public transports that have a limited time of operation during the evening.

### **2.4.4.3 Price**

South African audiences do not go to art events due to ticket pricing. It is specified that it is too expensive for ordinary people to attend (NAC, 2010).

It is implicit that audiences do not participate in the art because of time, limited transport and expensive event prices. Although knowledge and the meaning of art are seen as factors contributing to lack of theatre attendance or art events, there is a question of what can be done to maintain theatre attenders into frequent attenders, and change non- attenders into attenders. In isolation, there is a need to develop audiences in South Africa, especially Johannesburg in order to increase theatre attendance so that people may continue and begin to appreciate and understand art.



In a broader context, research based on Visual Art in South Africa demonstrate that lack of audience attendance does not exist only in theatre, but even the visual art industry is experiencing the similar problem as theatres. Research shows that public consumption of the visual arts - whether as audience or consumers - is much smaller than most international comparators in the developed world, and that there is a significant untapped domestic market for the visual arts (HSRC, 2010). According to The Human Sciences Research Council, *et al* (2010) Research conducted by Business of Art South Africa on Visual Art, suggest that 3.18 million adults in South Africa (slightly less than 10 % of the adult population) are “extremely interested” in the visual arts and between 34% and 45 % of adults in South Africa go to art exhibitions. Furthermore, analysis of the primary data on attendance at public and private art museums and collections estimates that only 1.2 million South African of all ages (2 % of the total population) visits these institutions annually, with the likelihood of some duplications in these visitor numbers (The Human Sciences Research Council, *et al.*, 2010).

## **2.5 International Perspective**

### **2.5.1 Understanding Why People Go To Theatre**

Based on Turrini (2012) research study, “audience development in Performing Arts: using Markov model to build art institution strategies towards new and existing audiences”, audience’s preference or tastes is viewed as a factor affecting individual’s decisions to participate in performing arts. A similar study states that the attitudes, behaviours, tastes, preferences and responses of audience are influenced by how they are treated while in the theatre. They have expectations concerning the play and they expect acting to be first rate and the environment conducive, otherwise they would go in search of more exciting entertainment (Nwamuo, 2006). However, another study by Hazelwood, Lawson and Rob (2009), argues that personal influence appears to be an effective way that motivates theatre attendance.

Audiences have a tendency of judging a piece of theatre work based on prior expectations. It has been argued that, pre-publicity, location, knowledge of the text, critical reviews and word of mouth influence the perspective of an individual (Olsen, 2002). Bennett (1997) describes

audiences as having a horizon of cultural and ideological expectations. They often take pleasure in choosing the play they want to attend and whom they want to attend with (Bennett, 1997). They want to be free to choose elements in the production that reinforce expectations and when those expectations are not met on stage, because of the content of the play, its execution, or the communicability of its message; the audience is often left frustrated (Bennett, 1997).

It is important to know and understand audience's motives in theatre attendance and to be able to keep in mind what audience needs are in order to meet their desires, whether in the theatre or in the theatre stage. In view of audience motive in theatre attendance, Wright (1959) states that audience go to theatre to be emotionally moved and that the theatre is first a chapel of emotions; the audience maybe surprised, stirred, excited, amused, frightened, saddened or thrilled - by the emotional content that is more important, fundamentally, than the intellectual. Above all, it is significant to understand audience motives concerning what moves them and challenges them positively. Contrary, Cassady (1982) suggest the specific motives that drive or draw audience in to the theatre. His findings indicate seven motives of audience attendance in theatre.

#### **2.5.1.1 Finding entertainment**

Cassady (1982) encapsulate that "there are various reasons for attending theatre. His emphasis on theatre motives is that people often attend for entertainment. Theatre is therefore seen as a platform that offers them a chance to explore and escape into a make-believe existence and forget everyday care. In this case, it is a means of relaxation for some audiences."

#### **2.5.1.2 Witnessing Change**

"Learning about resent, present, and imminent change is regarded as another reason for audience's motives in theatre attendance. Theatre, like other arts, not only mirrors the society in which it is produced but often judges the social, economic, and political climates in which it is presented (Cassady, 1982)."

#### **2.5.1.3 Confronting Social problems**

"Often the theatre presents human problems that deal with social issues, these issues that affect the society in which the art is presented. Cassady (1982) further emphasize that it comes closer to highlighting its audience's problems and needs."

#### **2.5.1.4 Learning about human nature**

“Besides learning about human problems, audiences attend theatre not only to learn about the society, but also about individuals and their problems. To depict human nature, theatre possesses universality and immediacy (Cassady, 1982). “

#### **2.5.1.5 Learning from the past**

“Audiences seek another kind of learning at the theatre: a play may acquaint us with the past in order to provide new interpretations of the present (Cassady, 1982). In this case, audience have an opportunity to learn about the past in a live and imaginative environment in the theatre space.”

#### **2.5.1.6 Reaffirming beliefs**

Sometimes, “audiences seem to like plays that are nothing more than observations of life. As a result, there is a need to observe life in a different dimension (Cassady, 1982).”

#### **2.5.1.7 Feeling emotions**

Above all, “audience wants to feel when they go to theatre and also experience emotions (Cassady, 1982).”

Similarly to Cassady (1982), Bergadaa and Nyeck (cited in Boudier-Pailler, 1999) extrapolated motivational typologies: social hedonism, intellectual enrichment, arousal of emotions, and entertainment as dimensions of the motives for going to the theatre.

#### **Social hedonism**

Boudier-Pailler (1999) writes that, “Theatre going has a strong social component.” The research demonstrates that Tinsley, Barrett and Kass (1977) argue that theatre attendance thoroughly satisfies not only the need for understanding, but also the need “to be with others”; and they refer to the need to belong. Further research conducted by Bourdieu (cited by Boudier-Pailler, 1999) illustrate that social hedonism includes the logic distinction: all individuals, whatever their social position, exhibit the same tendency to adopt practices that are typical of slightly higher of social strata.”

## **Intellectual enrichment**

“Another motive for going to the theatre is the opportunity to develop intellectually as a person. Attending a performance is sought to have a cognitive function and satisfies the need for “intellectual aestheticism” (Tinsley & Kass, 1979; Unger & Kernan, 1983)”

## **Arousal of emotions**

Contrary to Tinsley and Kass, Havlena and Holbrook (quoted in Boudier- Pailler, 1999), argues “that motives for going to theatre cannot simply be cognitive. They emphasize that the experience of attending plays can be better understood if the contribution of emotional goals is recognized, and this will also provide a greater sense of their complexity. Holbrook and Hirschman (cited in Boudier- Pailler, 1999) further highlight that while a cognitive approach offers a perfect explanation of the behaviours of someone seeking a solution to a specific problem, an effective analysis is more appropriate when trying to capture behaviours that is aimed at seeking sensations or experiences. Furthermore, it is then summarized that part of the motives for going to the theatre can be analysed in terms of emotions (Boudier- Pailler, 1999).”

## **Entertainment**

“Unger and Kernan (cited in Boudier- Pailler, 1999) specify that entertainment is found to be the most obvious goal of theatre attendance, in that it is common to all leisure activities that are perceived as such (Boudier- Pailler, 1999).”

In addition to motives of going to theatre, Bergadaa and Nyeck (cited in Boudier- Pailler, 1999) distinguish four main groups of theatre going: theatre as entertainment, educational theatre, theatre as intellectual stimulus and theatre as opportunity; as well as motives for theatre-going.

## **2.5.2 Goals of Theatre Attendance**

### **2.5.2.1 Theatre as entertainment**

“Theatre provides a way of relaxation for people to forget their every day care. It is an entirely pleasurable activity that demands no intellectual effort. In other words, theatre is a source of

entertainment offering audience a space for fun and pleasurable moments to escape into (Bouder-Pailler, 1999).”

#### **2.5.2.2 Educational theatre**

“This theatrical event is an artistic, cultural experience during which the audience freely absorbs knowledge; such performances are accessible only to the social elite. In this group, theatregoers get to develop their knowledge and also learn about cultural or social aspects in their societies (Bouder- Pailler, 1999).”

#### **2.5.2.3 Theatre as intellectual stimulus**

“The event is above all intellectually enriching. The event fosters personal development by providing an intellectual challenge, especially when the play takes new or complex forms. It challenges audiences intellectually (Bouder- Pailler, 1999).”

#### **2.5.2.4 Theatre as opportunity**

“Performances presented in theatre are seen as opportunities for audiences to have a social interaction. It further provides audience with networking opportunities (Bouder- Pailler, 1999).”

### **2.6 Audience development in theatre**

#### **2.6.1 Audience Development in the context of Johannesburg**

Research by Sack (2013) shows that audience development in Johannesburg is hardly conducted to develop audiences and that the city itself is failing to develop audiences. According to Sack (2013), “audience development in South African is racial and generalized - there is a historical practice. It is about how you frame the whole investigation, how you frame the problem. He emphasized that one of the most fundamental issues of the cities that successfully engage with their community, are cities that are fundamentally democratic, safe and have good public transport and manages to treat woman and children in an ethical way; creating boundaries of safety for those people and in Johannesburg we do not have that. As a result, the city is failing

young people in terms of making resources and facilities available for them to actively engage in theatre (Sack, 2013).”

In addition, Sack (2013) explained that there are many facilities in Johannesburg, e.g. community art centres and facilities all over the place; and these facilities should be places where kids and young people from poor neighbourhood can come together and work with a mentor or a trainer who produce theatre. It is therefore shocking that the city does not make this facilities or this kind of opportunities available. Furthermore, audience development has nothing to do with resources and money; it has something to do with bad management and lack of understanding of what needs to be done to achieve it (Sack, 2013).

## **2.6.2 Market Theatre Audience Development**

### ***Engaging in audience development (summary of an example of the Market Theatre)***

In the Market theatre<sup>2</sup>, “audience development is summarized in three points: “Bums on seat, development of new audiences for the theatre, and retaining already developed audiences”. In order to develop audience, the audience development department is expected to create audiences for the theatre production, create a data base of individuals and organizations that comes to the theatre, create clients base of regular theatre patrons and market the theatre generally”.

The Market theatre ensures effective audience development by developing ways to develop audiences. This includes selling at least 10% of seats available for sale in order to ensure a core audience for each performance. To identify and develop new clients and relationships, as well as to maintain and service current clients, to increase, store, monitor and use data of clients, by creating a database of social responsibility of clients to fulfil the Market theatre’s social responsibility programme of making theatre accessible to the community.

To sell production seats, audience development department must both know and understand the play they are dealing with. This is achieved through marketing meetings by - having an arranged meeting with the publicity department for the theatre director, the producing department, and the

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<sup>2</sup> “The Market theatre was founded in Johannesburg in 1976 by Mannie Manim and the late Barney Simon. It was constructed out of Joburg’s Fruit Market- built in 1913. It went on to become internationally renowned as S.A’s “theatre of the struggle”. Visit [www.marketttheatre.co.za/view/about-us/history](http://www.marketttheatre.co.za/view/about-us/history), for more.

audience development department, in order to discuss and share ideas on how to sell the production to the people. Information about the director, writer, and the play are obtained for effective understanding and further communication. As a result, the publicity and audience development department work closely together during this process. **Rehearsals**- staff members of the theatre are involved in the rehearsals in order for them to understand the play. This gives them an idea of which audience should be targeted for the play. In terms of tickets, the audience development request preview dates and starting points for the productions, opening nights, season end, price structures, and seating plans/number of seats available. **Bookings**- the theatre pays careful attention to booking procedures by making sure that booking regulations are adhered to: the client can only collect the ticket once the ticket is being paid for.

**Edu- theatre tickets**- In order to develop audience, the theatre also provides support to productions so that they can do their work. This is done by carrying out fundraising- by approaching businesses requesting them to sponsor tickets for students or disadvantaged audience. If the theatre is approached by students or disadvantaged community groups who wish to bring their productions to the theatre, the Edu- theatre fund can be used to sponsor them. The fund can also be used to assist groups with transport to the theatre and from the theatre.

Furthermore, theatre also offers complimentary tickets to clients; however, certain criteria have to be followed in issuing these tickets. For instance, clients who wish to watch a show before purchasing are offered two tickets (Ezeoke, 2013).”

### 2.6.3 A snapshot into Hillbrow theatre and Soweto theatre

The Hillbrow theatre is one example of theatre that bases their theatrical works on developing the young in and out of the inner city of Johannesburg. Their audience development schemes target various schools in order to develop a community of young people who are able to work through issues that affects them on a daily basis through play, acting, and singing. As part of their community transformation or development, the Hillbrow theatre offer art programmes that school children can engage in after school (Hillbrow Theatre, 2012).

Within the theatre’s programmes is the “Take a child to the theatre today” which is the worldwide initiative that encourages parents or members of the communities to take a child to

theatre. The take a child to theatre programmes allows children from the age of 5 years to be exposed to theatre at a young age and enabling them to learn about arts and culture in their country. The Hillbrow theatre is concerned with developing the community or society through developing young people in all areas of their lives. “This is done through workshops that are run in different schools with groups of learners aged 12 and 19 years. The workshops are run by the theatre’s facilitators who help the learners in the process of learning about drama and the aspects of theatre in South Africa (Hillbrow Theatre, 2012). We will discuss more about this section in the findings section).”

“Soweto theatre operates as part of the Joburg city theatres alongside with the Joburg theatre and Roodepoort theatre, under the umbrella management of the Joburg city theatres. The theatre’s audience development strategy includes early childhood development programmes, children’s theatre, and educational productions (Kennedy, 2014).” However, audience development for the Soweto theatre is a big challenge that needs more strategies on how to reach the audience living in the inner city of Johannesburg. According to the Soweto theatre artistic director Warona Seane in *The Citizen* by Dennill (2014), “the major challenge faced in the Soweto theatre is audience development, ensuring that there is a consistent flow of people in to watch the shows in good numbers. She adds, “We recently had a production from director Princess Mhlongo and ‘The girls In Their Sunday Dresses’ by Zakes Mda- Beautifully reimagined and acted with a lot of audience participation brought into the piece. However, we really struggled with audiences for that show. It’s about poverty, and hunger and waiting for something better (Dennill, 2014).”

Although theatres in Johannesburg strive hard to produce good and quality shows, there is a big issue or challenge when it comes to audience development. The question is what exactly needs to be done to get the audience to visit these theatres and be able to engage with the theatre works that are presented to them? There is a need to present theatrical works that will grab the audience’s attention and get them to come to watch the show more often.

## **2.7 Audience Development International context**

Every art organization has its own mission and vision for reaching their goals and building their organizations. Hayes (as cited in Wiggins, 2004, pp22) indicates that art organizations engage in audience development effort for many reasons. “Some have mission statements that directly



incorporate audience development or outreach goals whereas some are responding to cultural policy that encourages audience diversification and increased access in the arts. Others are pushed into engaging in audience development by granting organizations that are more likely to fund outreach programs and audience development efforts than operating expenses or ongoing programming. While some engage in audience development for strategic reasons; striving to increase the sizes of their audience in order to reach underserved populations, reinforce earned income, fill excess capacity in their houses or simply sell enough tickets to survive (Wiggins, 2004).”

In the paper based on “Thinking about Audience Development” The Heritage Lottery funds, UK (2010), define audience development as the actions that one takes to put people centre-stage; that involves making an effort to understand what they want and presenting activities in a way that is accessible, inviting and meaningful to them (HLF, 2010).” Hayes and Slater (2002), also define “audience development as the breaking down of barriers which hinder access to museums, and ‘building bridges’ with different groups to ensure their specific needs are met”. In the other hand, Rodgers (2000) explain audience development as being “the term coined to describe strategies to create new audiences and sustain the relationships with existing audiences, while maintaining artistic integrity for the arts.”

Audience Development is essential in building and increasing audiences in every art organizations. Connolly and Cady (2001), highlight that audience development is needed in organizations in order to forge bonds between individuals and institutions to help create communities with arts. To ensure that these communities grow and remain dynamic, the organizations in these communities must deliberately seek to address the needs, issues, and concerns relevant to the people of the community (Connolly and Cady, 2001).

In order to engage in audience development, organizations need to have a proper planning. In the research about “thinking about audience development” based on museums, The Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) discusses steps of audience development to assist organizations in attracting new and wider audiences.

## **2.7.1 The process of audience development**

### **1. Understanding your audience**

Firstly, audience development is about understanding your audiences in terms of what they like by; - identifying what their needs and desires are. Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) outlines that in order to develop audiences, one needs to know more about current audiences. Collect information such as how many people take part in your organization's activities, who they are, where they come from, and what they think of the experience on offer; are there barriers that get in the way of their participation? Most of all think about the people who do not take part.

### **2. Setting priorities**

Secondly, think about the scope for widening or deepening participation in your organisation. Which groups make sense for you to focus on? Indeed, this should take into account the needs and drivers of these groups, and what you can do to attract and retain their interest. In setting your priorities, you should show how your aspirations relate to your overall aims, set out what you hope to achieve and how you will measure your success (HLF, 2010).

### **3. Taking action**

Thirdly, draw up an action plan with details of what you plan to do to encourage participation. As a matter of fact, you should set out clearly what you propose to do and who will be responsible; by identifying your target audiences, activities, timescales, measures success and the resources required (staff, money, facilities, and skills/knowledge). Above all, put up your plan into action in your project or organisation (HLF, 2010).

### **4. Seeing if it works**

Finally, measure and evaluate what happens as you carry out the project. Look into the project and ask yourself, have you developed your audience? How do you know you

have? Have numbers and satisfaction levels increased? Have you engaged new and wider audiences? Have you achieved what you have expected? If not, why not? (HLF, 2010).

In the research study “Rethinking the missionary position; - the quest for sustainable audience development strategies” Hayes and Slater (2002), discusses two styles of audience development: the ‘mainstream style’- which focuses on existing arts attenders and the ‘missionary style’- focusing on traditional non- attendees. The ‘missionary’ audience dominates in terms of resources and priorities and are the most difficult and expensive group to attract (Hayes & Slater, 2002)

Based on Audience Development, cultural policy researcher, Kawashima (2000) suggests that there are four types of Audience Development. She distinguishes four different types of audience development: Audience Education, Taste Cultivation, and Extended Marketing and Cultural inclusion.

## **2.7.2 Types of Audience Development**

### **2.7.2.1 Audience Education**

Mainly targets the existing audience, but it tries to enhance the understanding and enjoyment of the arts which existing attenders currently consume. This type of audience development is more educational.

### **2.7.2.2 Taste cultivation**

Taste cultivation refers to the efforts to cultivate the taste of existing audience. It seeks to introduce different arts genres and forms of attenders of specific art forms (Kawashima, 2000).

### **2.7.2.3 Extended marketing**

This is the type of audience development that focuses on people who have a high attendance potential, but are not yet in the customer group.

#### **2.7.2.4 Cultural inclusion**

Audience development in the cultural inclusion is the one that targets the group of people who for social reasons are the least likely to attend the arts (Kawashima, 2000).

McCarthy & Jinnett (2001), suggest that there are three basic ways for institutions/organizations to increase participation in the art. McCarthy and Jinnett (2001) suggest three ways that organisations can use to increase participation: by *broadening it*- capturing a larger share of existing market by attracting individuals who constitute a natural audience for the art but are not currently participants, by *deepening it*- intensifying its current participant's level of involvement. *Diversifying it* - attracting new markets those individuals who typically would not entertain the idea of participating in the art.

### **2.8 Tools of audience development**

Audience development is an important aspect that every organization should be involved in to develop an active, diverse and a larger number of attenders who will actively participate in all the organization's activities being offered. However, for this initiative to work, theatre organizations need to do more than targeting specific audiences, they should go beyond knowing their audiences to understanding what goes on around them and by identifying major issues that affect them in order to be able to offer them theatre works that have an impact in their lives. In this case, audience development should not be a once off activity, but a continuous activity because often audience needs and desires, as well as behaviours, and lifestyles shift and changes, so it will become hard for theatres to understand the audience.

#### **2.8.1 Developing young Audiences in Johannesburg's theatre**

##### **Internet outreach through Social Media**

**Blogging**- blogging is a very useful tool to develop audience, it lets you share a wide collection of information, and your organization's content with your audiences. The blog can help the organisation to share its recent social media efforts, contests, and events (WordStream, 2007-

2014). For instance, in order to build audiences for a particular play that will be on stage in your theatre organisations, you might want to try to blog about the play before it is showcased just to get audience responses about the play. Another way that will be helpful is to upload a snapshot of the play, like a trailer, just to give the audience a feel of what the play is all about and what they should expect (WordStream, 2007-2014).

**Facebook-** through Facebook you can create the organization's Facebook page that you can get audiences to like and build the audiences. To keep your audiences interested and glued to your page, Facebook allow that you upload videos for your audiences to experience what you create in your organisation with just one click. Your organisation can revolve around forming a solid conversation with the audience through the sharing of articles, images, videos, and links. Furthermore, you can use Facebook statuses to tell people about your organisation services and the products you offer. You can further use Facebook to interact with your audiences, developing relationships with them and participating in conversations they post regarding your organisation (WordStream, 2007-2014).

**Google+:** Google + is also a useful tool that can be used to develop audiences for the theatre organisation. Just like Facebook, Google allow you to share videos, images, and links. Furthermore, it offers a Google circle option that one can take advantage to segment your organization's followers into small groups to enable you to share information with some followers while barring others. With Google+ you can also create a video conference through Hangouts. For instance, you can create a video chat concerning your events wherein you can invite your followers or your fans to your Google + community. Google communities will offer you to communicate and listen to your fan's feedback and comments (WordStream, 2007-2014).

**Twitter:** lets you broadcast your updates across the web. You can further follow tweeters who have similar industries as yours. Through Twitter, you can tweet about your events, discounts, and news updates for your organisation. Keep your audience close through effective communication by forming a dialogue with them more often when they comment about your organization (WordStream, 2007-2014). To add to this tool, Yang (2014) outlines that Twitter is also a useful tool for constructing the perfect tweet which will push audience engagement. Yang writes that to push audience engagement, "one can utilize Twitter lists, and Twitter advertising." By creating a list of targeted lists of your target audience's personas will further aid you to

connecting and pushing out content that they deem valuable.” Furthermore, “Twitter advertising is broken down into separate buckets: promoted tweets, promoted account, and promoted trends. One can use all three to align his/her organization’s content objectives (Yang, 2014).”

**LinkedIn:** is a professional social media tool, which is also useful to develop your organisation professionally. Through LinkedIn, one can join groups consisting of professional people with similar organisations. This is a good way to form a dialogue with like-minded people (WordStream, 2007-2014). Similarly, Yang (2014) states, “joining relevant groups is only one way to identify thought leaders and even position yourself as one.” Furthermore, one can also use the two LinkedIn updates: publishing platform and the content marketing (Yang, 2014). According to LinkedIn in the pushing platform updates “when a member post on the site, their original content becomes part of their professional profile, which is shared with their network and reach a number of professional people in the web. The “content marketing scoring” also gives your insight information on how your organic and paid content within LinkedIn performs. Moreover, “it measures the engagement of members with your sponsored Updates, Company pages, LinkedIn Groups, employee updates, and influencer posts (Yang, 2014).”

## 2.8.2 Crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing is another tool that is currently effective to engage and develop audiences, as it encourages the engagement of the audience or the community. Ballard (2014) writes, “When you are Crowdsourcing you open yourself to an increased audience engagement, ideas, growth hacking, brand advocacy, market research, and user generated content. Through building and trusting your audience when you run your organisation, you can crowdsource the content that they want.” When one use this method, he/she constantly gathering information from the audience or the community regarding a product or business idea in order to build the organisation according to what the audiences want.

### 2.8.2.1 Types of Crowdsourcing

There are different approaches that can be used to classify the effectiveness of Crowdsourcing in the organisations in order to engage the public communities. Howe (cited in Soresina, 2013)

discusses four categories in which the content of Crowdsourcing can be classified. the first type of Crowdsourcing is “**Crowd wisdom**”- which refers to the “collaborative intelligence of the audiences internally and outside the organisation to assist in solving complex problems.” the second category is “**Crowd creation**- which has to do with leveraging the ability and insights of a crowd of people to create a new products. The third category is known as the **Crowd voting**- a platform where members of the community take initiatives to vote for their most liked ides or product.” Finally, the **Crowd funding**- which is a profit based space Crowdsourcing platforms in the market of different types (Soresina, 2013).”

In addition, Dawson (In Soresina, 2013) unpacks similar approaches concerning Crowdsourcing.

- “**Distributed innovation platforms**- refer to the platform which people mostly operating outside of your organisation are most likely to have answers for your organization’s challenges.
- **Innovation prizes**- are used by companies, organisations, and governments to generate ground-breaking ideas. e.g. X-price
- **Content markets**- this is a platform for sharing works or posting creative work or products for people to purchase. e.g. online Art community
- **Prediction markets**- it is a platform where different opinions from the community people are brought to predict future-based concept based on “stock market exchange” mechanisms.
- **Competition platforms**- Are the most popular one for bringing in a sense of participation and collaboration. It is helpful for source experts and expertise in different areas. E.g. DesignCrowd (Soresina, 2013).”

### 2.8.2.2 Crowdsourcing via social media

According to Grier (2013:187) “Social media is connected to Crowdsourcing and it is useful for supporting Crowdsourcing. You can use social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, Pinterest, and WordPress blog to recruit a crowd, to engage the crowd, and to promote the work of Crowdsourcing. Furthermore, you can even conduct elementary Crowdsourcing with ordinary social media platforms (Grier, 2013: 187).” However, for Crowdsourcing to be successful in your organisation, you have to consider the importance of

audience participation because without audience, it is difficult to shape your organisation task based on the interest of the audience. Trends E- magazine (Cited in Agafonovas, 2013:76) writes that the “participation of the crowd is essential for Crowdsourcing, but for it to be effective it has to follow three requirements:

- The crowd should have diverse reasoning patterns;
- the crowd should be provided with a comprehensive tool for retrieving primary information, submitting their solutions and putting all the diverse ideas together;
- The participation of the crowd should be incentivized or a reason to be involved given (Agafonovas, A. et al, 2013).”

### 2.8.3 Crowdsourcing in South Africa

In South Africa, Crowdsourcing does not only cater for arts organisations, in fact South Africa has seen a massive growth of using Crowdsourcing to help small business in all different fields of profession. Crowdsourcing is used in initiatives to tackle issues like poverty, health issues, safety, environment, water issues, saving rhinos campaign, and so on. There are a number of Crowdsourcing organisations to help artists, business owners, managers, producers, etc. in growing their brands, ideas, campaigns or organisations projects. For example, we have “Thundafund” which is an “online Crowdsourcing café and a marketplace for creative and innovators in South Africa (ThundaFund, 2014).” For the purpose of getting project support, Thundafund works in 8 steps:

- **Step 1:** you submit a project
- **Step 2: Micro-Mentor (QA)** –“the Thundafund team select and curate the project proposal”
- **Step3: Project definition-** “audience (individuals or organisations) involved with Thundafund select and backs the project of their choice that is backed with an amount from R1 upwards. Each project offers “in-kind” rewards to backers in the form of producers or services produced by the funded project, also has a specified funding window period of 30-90 days, and given a 3 milestones with 3 respective funding targets, to recognise the bare necessities and the dream”.



- **Step 4: Hit a milestone 1- it's a GO** – “this is the platform for making the project happen with the specified amount the project will cover its objectives.”
- **Step 5: Milestone 2&3- the dream-** “The project has to reach milestone 1 for their project to be funded, and to keep the funds. If this occurs, they progress to milestone 2 and 3 until their funding duration is complete.”
- **Step 6- Thanks for the ride-** “Fundraising creators either reach their fundraising target within Milestone 1 or receive all the money they have raised or they don't and all the funds raised are returned to the backers. It's an all or nothing model.”
- **Step 7: Mentorship and Support-** “the project now go under a mentorship guidance process which is offered by Thundafund throughout the process of Crowdsourcing, from submission to project completion.”
- **Step 8: The Thunda-Crowd-** “Thundafund revolves around building project-supporting communities. It provides multiple channels for interactions between project creators, mentors and backers (ThundaFund, 2014).”

Similarly, another example of a Crowdsourcing initiative is the South African first Crowdsourcing social network “Evly”. Evly is about showcasing new products, providing problem-solving platforms, conducting market research and finding funding from the crowd for the products (Eyal, 2014).” Furthermore, “Evly collaborates with global brands, marketers, and agencies to help them optimize their social media marketing through the use of their (Evly) social marketing applications and platforms. It thereby brings organisations close to their communities by providing support to their conversations (Eyal, 2014).” In addition, Evly helps organisations or businesses to:

- **“Gain insight-** to extract valuable insight directly from the organization's community.
- **Problem solve-** collaborating with the community to brainstorm solutions that will further the organisation.
- **Innovate-** continuously innovate the organisation by allowing the community to share their ideas.
- **Engage-** continuously engage and build a relationship with your community.
- **Feedback-** provides you with feedback from all your projects in one central place.
- **Participate-** Encourage people to participate (Eyal, 2014).”

Beside the given examples, there are a number of Crowdsourcing sites that are offered nationally and internationally online through websites, and social networks such as Facebook. One can take advantage of these in order to build community involvement, participation, or to get support from other organisations and the community to conduct a project or an organisation based on every field of profession or discipline. In the current time, Social media has provided platforms for organisation to kick-start their businesses and to grow their audiences through Crowdsourcing. With the growing number of audiences using the internet, organisations can now connect with the community and get to know what they community think about their services (projects) and how they can be improved to best suit audience's needs. For the purpose of this paper, further tools to develop audiences extend to point 2.9, which organisations can consider in order to develop their audiences.

## **2.9 Ten tools of Audience development**

There are different tools that can be used by organizations in order to develop their audience. To explore useful ways of developing audience, Walker (2001) discusses 10 tools of audience development that will help art organizations to develop their audiences

### **2.9.1 Investment**

The author highlight that to invest in the process of audience development it means providing resources, staff, and budgets to support this effort. It also means that you recognize that it is a long- term process and with a solid investment of resources and creativity, it translates into amazing results.

### **2.9.2 Commitment**

Commitment to this process is considered essential, more especially when working with a small budget and minimal resources (staff, time and product). Organizations must be creative, tenacious and focused. In this case, having a passion is imperative.

### **2.9.3 Research**

Research is the most significant component and it is an ongoing process that never stops. Amongst several types of research to embark on this effort is the quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative, which tells us the numbers and percentages of ticket buyers, and especially reports on buying habits providing statistics that can be interpreted. Qualitative research, speaks to how and why a particular audience member responds to cultural products.

### **2.9.4 Review and analysis**

Once audience research is complete, the next step is to review and analyse. What opportunities can you create internally to manifest these plans? The review and analysis phase underscores why it is so important to have institutional support so that you can actually create the programs and events, such as discounts, free events, or utilizing other internal resources, to attract a broader audience.

### **2.9.5 Follow up**

After the research has being conducted, listened to respondent and assessed the data; discuss what you can do, what steps you can take that will give communities a signal that: “I hear you”, “let’s try this” or “what do you think?” then go back to the people with whom you met to discuss your ideas.

### **2.9.6 Partnerships**

If you are looking to create partnerships based on shared benefits or mutual respect, Walker (2001) suggests that one must be as diverse in programming as you want your audience to be. However, this can be difficult because artistic directors, producers, presenters have a certain mind-set about the type of cultural product they want to bring to their audiences. In this sense, if you ask audience they will tell you what they like. The ideal programming represents a cultural product for new audiences, as well as the traditional offerings.

### **2.9.7 Educating the audience and the artists**

Audience development also means educating your artists and audiences. According to the author we have to take on roles of educators. In this, Walker (2001) does not specifically refer to the arts and education programs that exist in some schools and community theatres; but he refers to designing systems that inform artists and audience about your vision. It means building support based on shared interests. In addition, to educate artists means to share the vision of your institution so that they can become aware of the larger picture.

### **2.9.8 Building the bridge**

It is important to bridge the gap between your organization and the audience. Walker (2001) states that, for many audiences previously excluded from arts institutions- whether the exclusion is conscious or unconscious is not the issue- the experience is similar. The fact is, there is an art opening, a dance concert, a theatre production- and they were not invited. It does not matter that your display advertisement appeared in the New York Times, Los Angeles or Chicago times. The Emphasis is that what really matters is when your audience crosses the bridge you have built through your partnerships, and accepts your specially targeted invitation to attend an event at your venue- this is just as important as targeted advertising. More important, that is why making audience development an institutional vision is a critical component of its success.

### **2.9.9 Creating value**

According to Walker (2001), audience development is not a charity work. Therefore, we are not building audience simply to increase earned income. Creating value is not always reflected dollar- for – dollar in a changed bottom line. The author emphasize that , while ultimately this is the goal, initially the efforts is to open doors to our institutions and work to collaborate on programs that diverse audience want to see. That is what will keep doors open.

### **2.9.10 Expressing appreciation**

In our efforts to build new audiences, expressing appreciation is more important. What do we appreciate? In this case, we need to appreciate the audiences in everything. Moreover, when one

is magnanimous, there is a true generosity of spirit; it opens the door of mutual respect, and a willingness to support your efforts (Walker- Kuhne, 2001).

Equally important, in order to build and develop audience, the Heritage Lottery Fund UK (2010) suggest ways to attract and attain your target audiences.

## **2.10 Ways to attract and retain your target audiences**

### **2.10.1 Consult and involve people**

Consultation with your local community and the stakeholders is very crucial to audience development, and is important when seeking to engage new audiences. Asking people's views and taking them seriously helps you to start your project with the right plans to attract your target groups. The Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) emphasize that consultation include questionnaires- asking people what interest them. For example, at a large local event or in a public space, consulting local people and organizations about your plans through workshops, focus groups or meetings e.g. of a community forum or resident associations or opportunities for target audiences to test ideas for new interpretation or a new website.

### **2.10.2 Make it relevant**

Look for new ways to present your heritage. This can be done by finding different stories to tell, which will strike a chord with new audience and stimulate existing audiences to visit again.

Examples include special exhibitions and activities that notice topics of current or local interest (e.g. Olympics or climate change). Working with a group of people to research and interpret the relevance of your collection, and building or green space e.g. with the Indian community in your area or disabled people. Building your collections to represent local communities; changing permanent displays to include objects, images, or stories that show greater diversity. Providing resources and support for local communities to display and interpret their own heritage or stage their own events; or opportunities for people to explore their identities through a local history project e.g. looking at the past experiences of people in a local industry or housing estate.

### **2.10.3 Improve design and amenities**

This can be done by making sure that your heritage site or the organization is accessible, and has facilities that meet people's needs in order to make the experience enjoyable. This means getting disabled people to carry out an access audit and recommend improvements. Getting new entrances, having clearer signage and orientation which invites people in and gives them confidence to explore. Further improving information and interpretation to allow easy access to wider audiences in order to meet their specific needs; and providing facilities required by particular groups e.g. seats, baby- changing room, cloakroom and toilets for school groups; or creating access to parts of the site not previously available to the public.

### **2.10.4 Take heritage to the audience**

Taking heritage out of its normal context enables you to raise awareness and reach new audiences. This is often called outreach. Organizations should do this by putting displays and activities off-site. For example, putting displays in community centres, hospitals, shopping centres, libraries or workplaces; and taking collections out - touring in a bus or in heritage loan boxes for schools and community groups. Working with schools, workplaces, care homes or prisons over an extended period of time on programmes of visits, activities and workshops; developing heritage ambassadors who can carry the message of the organisation into the community and provide a way in to new audiences; or oral history and reminiscence projects with groups in the community.

### **2.10.5 Market what you have to offer**

According to the Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) organisations should think of the image they are projecting to the audience and search for new and innovative ways to reach people. Promotion and publicity needs to support and be part of all your audience development activities, and also assist to encourage new audiences. To achieve this, the organisation should seek advice from target groups, messages and language of their promotional material where it is distributed, through the use of new technology and social networking such as podcasts and twitter. Developing links with community organisations and having promotions through local newspapers, radio stations, and community media, websites and email bulletins that cater to particular groups. And taking advantages of nationwide initiatives such as Heritage Open Days

or Volunteer week to reach a broader audience; or putting your project forward for an award (e.g. for child friendly museums or Green flag) to raise your profile.

#### **2.10.6 Make people feel welcome**

Another method of attracting audience is by making audience feel welcomed in your organization. The Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) indicates that organisations must aim for an atmosphere in which everyone feels comfortable, safe at ease. This is through changing opening hours in order to meet audience needs, training staff and volunteers in customer care and the needs as well as expectations of different groups. Changing roles of security staff into guides, greeters and interpreters; providing information and interpretation in the languages of the target audiences e.g. putting on tours for local groups; adopting a charging/ pricing structure that does not exclude certain groups; or encouraging visitors and users to provide feedback via comment forms, or visitor books.

#### **2.10.7 Make it friendly and fun**

Attracting audience can also be achieved by making the site a place where people can meet their friends, socialize, and have fun. Moreover, the organisations can also open the site as a venue for community meetings and events. This include providing social facilities, e.g. a café, seating areas, internet access, crèche; and making the place available for community use at hours that suits the community; or staging events and performances (e.g. music, theatre, dance) which can bring in people who would not otherwise come.

#### **2.10.8 Encourage children and families**

Children are a key audience to heritage attractions. They often visit with schools and provide a major stimulus for family visits. The organization can encourage children and families by creating an informal environment that makes children welcome. For example, by providing them with child-friendly facilities, hands-on activities and affordable catering; displaying children's work on site; running activities in the schools holidays and the weekends; working with teachers and local authority staff to develop school programmes; or giving children on school visits incentives to encourage family visits e.g. free tickets (HLF, 2010).

### **2.10.9 Become more representative**

Becoming more representative means looking for ways to make your organization and projects more representative of the audience you are seeking to attract. For example, by encouraging local people to apply for jobs; offering work experience opportunities for young people; encouraging people to join your friends group or become volunteers. Encouraging wider representation on your governing body; and setting up advisory groups to represent stakeholders and community interests; or making sure that the images you use in marketing or information are representative of a wider community.

### **2.10.10 Evaluation- seeing it works**

Evaluation shows whether your audience development initiatives have achieved what you hoped for. It involves measuring the success of your work and using evidence to demonstrate the benefits and impact of your project. Evaluation also helps you to focus time and resources on initiatives that work. Furthermore, it is important to build evaluation in from the beginning and to make it an integral part of the project because without measurement it is difficult to establish whether there has been an improvement. Looking at feedback and monitoring numbers can also help you to improve your audience development work during your project, making it even more possible to achieve your objectives.

The measurement of success might include:

Changes in numbers of people taking part, using or visiting your heritage;

Changes in the profile of your audiences, measured by surveys;

Levels of satisfaction and enjoyment;

More positive attitudes towards heritage, e.g. participants feeling that heritage is more relevant to their lives; or Increased awareness and recognition of your sites (HLF, 2010).

Even though the Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) research was based on developing audience in museum sectors in order to attract and attain audiences in museum sites, it can be believed that the same methods can be of assistance in developing audience for theatre organizations. As a result, this study has found the tools to be highly significant mostly because they can also be



applied in theatres to develop audiences in South African theatre. By improving theatre management and increasing attendance in theatres within the inner city of Johannesburg.

## **2.11 Two models of Audience Development**

In order to build audiences in the art, scholarly researchers suggest two models of audience development that will help develop art organizations and building audience. Wiggins (2004) discusses the RAND model of audience development and the MAO (Motivation/Ability/Opportunity) model of audience development. According to Wiggins (2004), the RAND model is regarded as an improvement of earlier models of audience development in that it provides a method for not only segmenting non- participants but it also provides a method of understanding the factors that influence individual's likelihood of participating and the process they progresses to the point of becoming a participant. It further provides organisations with a good understanding of the nature of potential barriers to art participation (Wiggins, 2004).

The MAO model however is based on the premise that consumers experience barriers to take action because they lack the motivation, the ability, or the opportunity to act, or some combination of the three (Wiggins, 2004). Stokmans (2005) also outlines that, MAO model relates motivation, ability, and opportunity, by which the target groups are identified, directly to the barriers to overcome in order to increase participation. In addition, Stokmans (2005) adds that the MAO- model assumes that consumers experience three types of barriers to a specific extent that determines the probability of participation. The barriers are associated with the motivation to participate- which is the desire to act, the ability to participate- having the skills or proficiency to act, and the opportunity to participate- the absence of environmental barriers to action (Wiggins cited in Stokmans 2005).

Although the above models have being helpful in developing audience internationally, it cannot be assumed that the same will apply in the local context. The explanation could be because international theatres are well advanced and developed with resources and facilities to build audiences, whereas in South Africa there are lack of resources and facilities to support people to

actually do their work;- because we are still a developing country faced with issues of poverty, crime, and other economy issues that affect theatre attendance.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

This study or research used a qualitative research approach in order to investigate audience's motivations and behavioural patterns towards theatres attendance in Johannesburg, South Africa. De Vos et al. (2002, pp79), (As cited in Forrester, 2008) explain that, "a qualitative research approach refers to research that elicits participant account of meaning, experience or perception. It produces descriptive data in the participant's own written or spoken words." Due to little knowledge about the audience motivation in attending theatres in Johannesburg, a qualitative approach was therefore chosen to investigate what motivates audience in going to the theatre, why there is lack of theatre attendance in the inner city of Johannesburg and how the theatre organizations develop audience to increase attendance in Johannesburg.

The study was guided by three themes:

- 1.) Reasons for theatre attendance or non-attendance,
- 2.) Theatre opportunities/ challenges that create a link between theatre productions and audience, and
- 3.) The legislative environment that addresses government policies in audience development.
- 4.) Theatre as a source of transformation or development in South Africa, Johannesburg

#### **Data collection**

The researcher conducted 3- 6 face- face interviews with theatre attenders, theatre- non-attenders and theatre managers around Braamfontein and Newtown. In addition, two interviews were also conducted in the Market theatre Laboratory and the Hillbrow theatre based on community initiatives in terms of constructing social change or development in the society using theatre. Open questions were presented to respondents and were guided by four research themes. Follow-up questions or probing questions were used to expand the participant's responds to questions and to seek clarification. Furthermore, conversations were recorded using a blackberry mobile

phone and transferred into a personal computer for safety. However, to collect further data, the researcher also took field notes in concurrence with the interview and follow-up interview. The purpose of taking field notes derived from the fear of being mugged while interviewing audience around Johannesburg; as the researcher recently has been a victim of mugging in Braamfontein. Due to that issue, another alternative for collecting data was taking notes as the participants were being interviewed.

Direct observation was conducted in the Joburg theatre (the Space theatre), the Joburg Theatre Park, the Market Theatre, and Newtown Park in order to observe and understand audience awareness of theatre and attitudes toward attendance to theatre shows. Settings, activities, and audience response on attendance were also observed. The researcher also observed the students at Wits who socialize in the Wits theatre, to understand what they perceive theatre to be; their knowledge and understanding of what is happening in the theatre. Participant observation was conducted and 5 theatre audiences at the Wits theatre were interviewed concerning their motivations to theatre attendance.

For this study, one focus group was conducted with 6 students at Wits University, Johannesburg. The focus group comprised of students from different fields of studies: Arts and Culture Management, engineering, sciences and mathematics. Questions were set, categorized in themes that addresses why people go to theatre, opportunities and challenges that affect theatre attendance and theatre management and audience development. Participants were allowed to interrogate the ideas, asking questions, sharing knowledge of theatre, and exchanging ideas to probe solutions.

## **Sampling**

The study was conducted using three sets of sample: Theatre attenders, theatre non-attenders (located at Wits University), and theatre managers from theatres in Johannesburg. Data was compiled based on audience motives in theatre attendance in Johannesburg, Lack of Audience interest in theatre in Johannesburg, Audience development in Johannesburg theatres.

It involved 20 theatre attenders and non-attenders located in the University of Witwatersrand and Newtown. It also located 20 individuals from Braamfontein area and 8 theatre experts. The

Market theatre was used as a central theatre for the research study, in terms of audience development, in addition, the Hillbrow theatre and the Market theatre Lab were also considered for community development through theatre. Nonetheless, the researcher also observed the Joburg theatre and the Wits Theatre in Braamfontein in terms of audience attendance. The study targeted participants from the age of 18- 40 years old. Nevertheless, the majority of participants who took part in the study were mostly young audience from the age of 18.

A qualitative descriptive design was implemented for this study. According to Burns and Grove (2003), a descriptive design “is designed to provide a picture of a situation as it naturally happens.” The reason for choosing this design was not to explain audience behaviours in terms of theatre attendance, but to understand how they view theatre in association with their real life situations. A descriptive design was used to investigate audience motivation in theatre attendance and theatre non- attendance. Data collection was based on current theatre state in Johannesburg, theatre attendance and audience development. Using this research design, the study aimed to answer questions regarding the subject of the study that deals with the current status of theatre attendance in Johannesburg.

Furthermore, the study implemented data procedures in order to assist in data collection. The procedures used to collect data followed three steps:

### **Step 1: Identifying Data type**

The researcher identified the type of data that were needed for the research, which was in conjunction with the state of theatre in Johannesburg, in terms of audience attendance, theatre management, and Audience Development. In this case, the researcher consulted current existing literature, both locally and internationally and secondary data that was aligned with the purpose of the study.

### **Step 2: people who will be involved**

Theatre managers, theatre attenders, theatre non-attenders, audience development specialist/experts were consulted and used as sources in the process of data collection.

### **Step 3: setting a schedule**

The study was planned accordingly to meet the requirement of the people who were involved in providing the necessary data to the researcher. A schedule consisting of time, locations and days was prepared to provide a guideline of where and when data were to be collected for the study (CNCS, 2013). The researcher contacted theatre experts via emails and set up appointments for interviews that depended on their availability. Furthermore, interviews with participants were conducted randomly. The researcher approached participants and asked them questions based on the research question.

### **Limitations**

This research study was limited to theatre attenders, non-theatre attenders and theatre managers; these participants were the main focus in the study in order to answer the research questions. There was no enough secondary data based on general theatre organizations in Johannesburg. Moreover, this limited the research study, in a sense that there was no growth in the literature in the context of Johannesburg theatre knowledge. This in turn, provided thick local information that can support the findings of the research study.

### **Ethical consideration**

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee in the faculty of Humanities, at University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. The researcher obtained permission from the Market theatre, Market theatre lab, the Joburg theatre and the Hillbrow theatre and from participants to conduct the interviews for the research.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS AND RESULTS

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter reflects the qualitative results that were obtained from Face-face interviews, direct observations, Participant observation, and the focus group. The results were obtained from three research samples: theatre attenders, theatre non- attenders, and theatre managers/ audience development experts. The purpose of this chapter is to report the findings of the research that was conducted in order to answer the research question; and that is what motivates audience to go to the theatre or lack interest to attend theatre. This section is divided into five categories:

1. Motives of theatre attendance in Johannesburg (theatre attenders)
2. Motives of theatre non- attendance Johannesburg (Non- attender's perspectives)
3. Findings from a Focus Group
4. Findings from theatre managers/ audience development experts
5. Findings from the researcher's observations
6. Findings regarding theatre for change/transformation or development

##### **4.1.1 Motives of theatre attendance in Johannesburg**

*The results from recorded data and field notes*

In view of audience motives in theatre attendance in the inner city of Johannesburg, there are key factors that appeared as motives for theatre attendance. The first key motivation for theatre attendance was concerned with personal influence. Most respondents in the research mentioned that they mostly go to the theatre due to the influence of a friend or a person close to them. In some way, their motives are influenced by personal feelings or the relationship they share with the person who has interest or involved in the theatre.

The second motivation was the knowledge of actors. In the word of one participant: "I go to the theatre because I know the people who are performing." Respondents emphasized that they are likely to go to the theatre because of the actors who are acting in a play. Most of them highlighted that they visits the theatre to watch the actors who they are familiar with their work

and they know of the actor to produce good quality performance. In addition to the motive, another Participant pointed that: “I enjoy seeing a legend or a celebrity.”

The third key motivation factor was the love of art. It appears that most people go to the theatre because they appreciate and love the art. This comes with an understanding of what art is and how valuable it is to them. For instance, one respondent said, “if a person doesn’t have the love for art or value the art, there is no way they can go to the theatre”. In this case, the love of art plays a dominant part in persuading audience to attend a theatre performance.

The final key motivation factor was enjoyment. Enjoyment is another motive that drives audience into the theatre. One theatre attender’s word on enjoyment was “I enjoy the theatre due to the fact that it’s live”. Participant’s description of theatre, how it provokes the reality to life, and how fun and relaxing it is, added value to the outcome that audience motivations in theatre attendance are impacted by enjoyment. Besides going to the theatre to enjoy watching the play, one participant mentioned that he goes to the theatre for the “enjoyment of being in the theatre environment”. In addition, another participant added in describing the theatre environment as an intimate place to be.

Concerning motives for theatre attendance in Johannesburg, the following factors also appeared to be factors that trigger audience response to theatre attendance. The motives range from the need to be inspired by art to the need to be motivated by what is playing (see table 1)

**Table 1: theatre attendance key driver, and motive of theatre attendance**

<b>Key driver</b>	<b>Motives</b>
<b>Educational drive</b>	To learn To have knowledge of the artist in the play To be informed Getting real life message from what is heard in a daily life Getting knowledge To understand reality in an improved way on stage



<b>Personal drive</b>	To experience live performance To watch variety of performance To relieve the mind The experience of reality To relieve stress Escapism
<b>Social drive</b>	To be engaged and be drawn into the performance Entertainment Interesting story lines Socialization To see something new in a play

#### **4.1.2 Findings from theatre non-attenders in Johannesburg.**

The key dominant motivating factor for lack of theatre attendance in Johannesburg was the issue of awareness. Respondents interviewed in the research motioned that they have no idea what theatre is. When interviewed, one respondent referred to theatre as the theatre that exists in the hospital, where operations are normally performed. Another respondent said that theatre unawareness could be caused by the fact that “people are not introduced to theatre in an earlier stage, especially those residing in underprivileged area. As a result, if people don’t know about theatre they won’t go to the theatre”. The response from a participant concerning theatre unawareness was, “people are unaware of ways in which they can get in the theatre. There is lack of information about theatres”.

The second most motive was lack of time. Most respondents spoke about having no time to attend theatre performances. A participant’s word was “It’s a matter of time and chance to go to

the theatre. I have not really found the time. I have being asked before to go but it was just bad timing”. In this subject, complains of being over worked and the matter of having more important things to do that life demands, came up over and over again during interviews from theatre non-attenders, and it was linked with the fact that people are just busy to attend the theatre.

Amongst other motives of theatre non- attendance, the study found that audiences in Johannesburg do not go to the theatre because there is a perception that theatre is boring. There is a perception that theatre is limited to certain people, for instance, artist, white people and art students. To support the above statement, one respondent described “theatre as being a place for people with status” while another student said, “Theatre is exclusive to certain people. To some people there is a feeling of not belonging”. While other participants view theatre as being an environment for other people, not ordinary people, others say, “They have no interest in theatre only because there is nothing interesting in the theatre”. There is a further perception that theatre is for old people

Exposure joins in as another factor that motivates audiences not to go the theatre. Theatre non-attenders argue that they do not go to the theatre because they are not exposed to theatre more. Some participants spoke of their dissatisfaction of theatre plays. One student mentioned, “Theatre gets boring if the story, especially the one taken from a book is not performed correctly in my expectations. The other reason that reflects on audience not going to the theatre was found that “stories don’t or no longer reflect what people are going through”. Moreover, the critics about poor storyline, poor stage performances and poor productions emerged to be problems leading to lack of theatre attendance. One respondent recall the first time he went to the theatre, which in his own words he calls “a mistake”. He reveals, “There are some productions that I feel that they are a waste of my time....like the one that I went to it was a waste of my time”.

Other motives of theatre non- attendance that were recognized were lack of opportunities to go attend theatre, lack of someone to go with, change of lifestyle, affordability ( no money to attend), laziness and ignorance, transportation, change of personal interest, no passion for

theatre, and lack of theatre attraction. In addition, motives that were found by participants to be affecting theatre attendance in Johannesburg are presented below.

**Table 2: Key driver and motives for theatre non- attendance**

Key driver	Motives
Economy	Unemployment Crime Safety Lack of education
Theatre management	High ticket prices Lack of proper marketing Poor advertising Lack of theatre visibility Accessibility Theatre shows are mostly during the evening Plays are more modernized A shift of cultural performances Lack of interactions
Awareness	Not knowing the value of art

### **4.1.3 Findings from a focus group**

This section was conducted with 6 Wits students and from different Fields of study, e.g. Arts and Culture management, law, sciences and mathematics. The students were asked to respond to how they view theatre in Johannesburg in terms of attendance, non- attendance, audience

development and its role in the society. The outcomes of the focus group are presented as follows:

### **The view of theatre in Johannesburg (attendance and non-attendance)**

Respondent 1 mentioned that: “A lot of people don’t know what theatre is. When you ask them of what theatre is, they will tell you of a theatre that is in the hospital”. Respondent 2 expressed his own view of theatre: “Being not so frequent theatre goer, I consider theatre as something you do for fun. It is not something you will do frequently like a job. The way I view theatre depend on how you are in terms of what bring you here in Joburg....that will determine how frequently you will go and what you are here for. In general, attendance in theatre is highly unlikely for people like me depending on the field of study you are and depending on the amount of time you have”.

Respondent 3 gave his own thoughts about theatre: “I don’t think that is the thing of studies...I think people find theatre ‘Boring’...I think is that theatre is boring. I mean you can still download things, and you can watch movies everywhere other than going to the theatre. I still find it boring and time consuming”. In the contrary Respondent 4 shared his experience in theatre...his words were “I have being to the theatre a couple of times, some shows are beautiful and some not so good, quiet technical. When you go to the theatre these days you do not go to just watch a show... I mean these guys put up music concert and festival in the theatre, if you know what I mean. Some shows you will not find them in the cinema or even when you download or on TV, they are much greater when you put them into the theatre because there are people you see there on stage. And it gives you different dimensions of entertainment.”

Theatre exposure appeared to be one leading motive that affects theatre attendance in Johannesburg. In Respondent 1’s words: “For a person who has never being exposed... that is why you will find people like him say... for me theatre is just boring. That is why we need to make sure that from that generation (young) we start taking them to theatre, so that they become exposed. For people who do ballet, for example, you will find that their audience range from the grandmother, everybody, the whole family will come and support this person. Moreover,

they take them while they are still young and for us it is different, you find that my mother is somewhere drinking and they do not care about such things... and you grow up and even if you have the love for theatre. But if you have friends and family who actually take you to the theatre, the love of theatre will develop”.

There are things that one need to understand about theatre and audiences. Respondent 2 emphasized (in his own view) “There are couple things to consider when thinking about audience in theatre. There are some things you can only get in theatre. Theatrical plays are more of addressing social economic issues, they just do not address your entertainment where you just see people shooting each other and the starring wins...so it depends also on your own values. But beyond that the majority of the population in this country is black and where black people are concentrated are they close to theatres... you know. So *aaah*...for you to spare interest in them [...] I can’t just come from Alexandra just to Joburg... just to come and watch a show for an hour...to me that’s a waste of time, that’s a waste of money and that’s a waste of resources”.

In addition, Respondent 4 said “Well its true...I can’t take my last 50 bucks and go watch a show ...you know what I mean. In Respondent 3’s words: “the other thing is personally- If you are not into drama, you are not into drama. Because you can find it boring from high school, what are chances to go and watch it in varsity...so I think even personality plays a role”

During the discussion, it appeared that audience attends shows that satisfy them and meet their needs. Respondent 1 gave an example of Justin Bieber’s music concert in South Africa (Johannesburg). “For instance, if Justin Bieber is here...hypothetically speaking, their show is not even theatre, its music and its entertainment and it’s that, but their shows attract more audience...tickets get sold out. But a part of me feels like....yes we can say you know I have my last 50 rand [...] now times are changing...yes there are issues of poverty and things like that, but people have money now you know...like ordinary people they can...If they want something, if they love something, they are able to invest in it. However, I guess us as artist, as creative people...we need to find ways as to how can I make you who finds it boring or a

person who is a doctor... And you who have other things that you are fascinated by- to be able to find you and grab you and create something that will be of interest to you”.

There is a perception of who goes to the theatre and why other people (new audience) such as young people do not want to go to the theatre. Respondent 4 observed that: “mostly older people are the one who are in the theatre. The theatre environment is not welcoming to people who are new to the space. When you compare theatre to another form like music, if you go to a place like Moreteleng Park in Mamelodi...the environment is quiet friendly, you don’t think people are watching you. But when you go to the theatre is like people can see that you are new to these things...you know what I mean? And one thing I have observed is mostly older people there”. The other problem that contributes to lack of attendance is the location of theatre. In Respondent 2’s words:

“The other problem is where theatre is developed...for example in institutions like Wits, you never have inter faculty Interaction- a person who does chemistry has no idea what is happening in the Wits theatre...They have no idea. It is only when a friend is performing, you get to know, but beside that what happens to other shows? The environment of the university, as I said it’s the edge also doesn’t allow you to stretch out and be flexible and it *sucks*”.

The location of theatre was mentioned as a cause of lack of attendance, reason being that most theatres are located in metropolitan areas. As a result, theatres do not attract people who are out of the metropolitan areas. Respondent 4 vividly recalled, “When growing up... I use to think that theatre is for whites. Cause whites have access to theatre from primary, secondary...from an early age they develop an aesthetics appreciation of an art form”. He further emphasize that for “an ordinary person who has never being introduced to theatre from an early age... when they go to the theatre, first of all they struggle because they are trying to make sense of what is happening. For a theatre goer, they know what they are going to look at...they are able to analyse a character, they are able to analyse a script [...] That kind of interaction is spelled by the ability to appreciate the aesthetics of an art form. And you get the aesthetics of an art form only when it has being taught to you, it has being introduced to you at school”.

Respondent 4 further added, “If you notice something, the setting capacity as well, if you compare it to a capacity of people who would go to a music show basically; a music show will actually have a bigger space to accommodate lots of people. So the seating capacity on its own restrict people, those people ....if you are not familiar with theatre, you would go there the first time and you will think wow, you know what I mean?”

### ***Does theatre contribute to the development of the society?***

The group mentioned that when establishing a theatre it is important that we think about who we are putting the theatre for. For instance, Respondent 3 highlighted, “In Johannesburg there are just many activities. There is a challenge in terms of competition. Competition is too tight here in Joburg. In that case, how are you going to convince people to leave all that they are doing to attend theatre? Respondent 5 said, ‘I think theatre creates awareness... but currently, theatre doesn’t contribute to the development of the society. In terms of contributing to the society, Respondent 2 summarized “Theatre can move just by making people aware. Umoja, for example, is more of expressing cultural awareness. It is vast on expressing African integrity to people out there. If you find a show that relate to all social issues that will get people towards it.... it depends on what it is that the person is saying that will contribute to the development of the society. For now I won’t say it’s doing enough because of its lack of impact and visibility”

### ***Government policies on audience development***

The problem that was found here was policy implementation. The researcher argued that there are government policies (the White Paper) in South Africa that support art participation. But the problem is the implementation part- we turn to do things that are not aligned with what we say we gonna do in our policies. In Respondent 2’s words: “Ya, that is what kills government. Government has beautiful policies and constitution...but it is the how- the implementation. In the end, if you look at demographics- Black and White...we are trying to survive.

The researcher then suggested that if for example we can adopt the Britain policy that Respondent 2 mentioned below....and seriously implement it, it can work. But Respondent 1 argued that “the reason why we have been failing is that we try to take other models from outside countries and try to implement them here (South Africa), and the situation here is just so unique. We need things that are relevant to what the current situation is. The reality is we are competing with issues of education, of health...I mean those are social development [...] it's true and we can't do anything about it...we are hungry, you know? There are issues of poverty that we are dealing with, there are issues of service delivery, there are issues of corruption that are impacting us. We give just a minority.

### ***How does audience attendance affect theatre programmes?***

Respondent 4 outlined that “it affects it in a sense that, I mean now we are talking about curating here. If you are going to put up a show, who are you putting it for? What is going to be the main acts? Because I think people also want to see faces like they know on stage...that is part of programming. I think, if you put up a show and you have people like Mbongeni Ngema, we know them- and those people are famous...and also what kind of a show is it going to be?.

Whilst, Respondent 2 said “I have a question on that, because what I have seen on TV is that they use the same principle. You keep your actors the same as long as you can, so that people get familiar with the characters...then how does that begin if you do not give new people a chance? Basically that goes back to people who have learnt their cast...where they actually need to keep a consistent type of people all the time for a long time. So people know that when I go to the Joburg Theatre and there is this guy who is performing...I know he is exceptional. So it cannot just be like TV. Creating an impression means that you have to keep the same type of people in the set....but you have to begin somewhere. Eventually create a face for theatre. [...] if we are talking about cultural shows, you know Mbongeni Ngema is the one who hit theatre hard. Like in action I am thinking “spies”, am thinking James Bond. You create an impression that determines your example; you know...how long has James Bond been running for? It is maintaining character.



In comparison to international theatres, Respondent 1 shared that “if you introduce policies, for example, in Britain, where people in theatre are given certain criteria...Where they have to advertise their materials...even their prices are radiated by the government. So they know they are not targeting people who can afford but you also targeting people who cannot afford... so that’s how they balance it up... where they provide a means of a subsidy. It’s like...Okay you can bring ten people from Alexandra, but we will subsidize that [...] but the other guys have to pay full amount. And shows that are given much attention are the ones that are socially relevant”.

### ***Audience development Solutions***

It appeared that there are quite a number of factors that affect the way people view theatre and their decisions towards theatre attendance in Johannesburg theatres. In order to develop audience, Respondents suggested tools that can be helpful in attracting new audience and maintaining current audiences in the theatre. The first solution for audience development was advertisement. Respondent 6 said: “Advertisement- if there can be a lot of advertisement.... I use to know that there is a theatre, but I did not know what exactly happens there, but if this can be broadcasted, always advertised on TV. For instance, with music shows, I think that is what they do... they advertise it and make sure that it is out there. If the theatre can be made popular I think. If a channel like that can open, so that people will know what theatre is and what is about”.

In addition, Respondent 2 said, “bombard people with interesting stuff.... You know, for example, and advert of an insurance company just says that ‘*this advert is subliminal*’...that is it full stop! And they show you an icon. That in itself spark a debate in the house...people will now begin to say... ‘No dude its subliminal because’.... that is the concept. So now when somebody else is thinking *aaah uhmm*...smart insurance, they are thinking that company, because they made people to start talking about it. Eventually that is how you create awareness. *Ya* so its *aaah*... you’re advertising, it shouldn’t be as bland as just going to theatre and sitting down. It must have some form of impact. And again social relevance [...] social relevance- where do you wanna hit? I mean if you truly wanna encompasses a spectrum of audiences from

children to old people; what you really need is to target the older people and at times they are with their children... and you target them when the children are at home...so they cannot leave without the children.

The second solution was targeting audiences. Respondent 3 said, “The thing can be the target- if a show is targeting young people. You should take a time to talk to the people before and your target first. Because sometimes we just pass a theatre post. Look at the target you are targeting and talk to them [...] and say this is what is going to happen, what are your views? Because the theatre is just going to be there and you find that your target does not even attend. The third solution found in the focus group was creating expectations. Respondent 5 highlighted that: “Sometimes it depends on what you want people to receive from the theatre. It depends on your targets...it depends on the content of the play...because personally, the last time I went to a theatre was in high school and I have never even thought of going back again...even so, I went that time because there was someone who was teaching us Arts and Culture who was there. Even here in Joburg, I have being in couple shows, but it was also because I knew somebody there....so I think it depends on your target and the content”.

Respondent 2 responded by saying “I don’t know...I mean if you gonna say you are targeting certain people, I think you are only restricting yourself. For me... the reasons I will be interested in something...Firstly create an expectation in me. Basically, my mind has an image of what the show is going to be about.... But if I come to the theatre and you do something else I have expected, you have altered my own expectation and that is where entertainment comes in...that is where entertainment comes in. And entertainment does not have to mean nothing, but the form stimulation when I can relate to. My response will be, look firstly who is not attending, why and target them specifically. Do it if you going to target people- target the ones who do not show up and create an environment for those who love theatre. It’s about striking a balance”.

The third solution was incentives. Respondent 3 expressed “I think money is the problem. I do not know how much is for this theatre thing for one show. If People can go to the theatre for free- cause people like free stuff. If people get to watch the shows for free time and time again, they will get used to it. When you are familiar with theatre you won’t have a problem to pay for it because you are already addicted to it”. In the contrary the researcher argued, “Sometimes

theatres have free shows but people don't go. But I think that if people knew about theatre, what it does and what to get out of it. When you pay for something that satisfies you, you don't mind paying for it, even if it is your last 50 rand”.

Respondent 3 argued that “I don’t think what you are saying is relevant to rural areas, because like okay... if you go to rural places, most of the time they have nothing to do. Believe me they have a lot of time that is why case statistics of pregnancy are high. So I do not think if you come with that thing and for free [...] they have time on their own. I think they will go...but here is Jozi even if you say two rand, but I already have plans. So I do not think you can compare the two. In rural areas there, they have a lot of time in their hands...believe me I live there. And they lack activities. You know you go to school, you come back, you go to practice, you come back, you cook ...something like this is a routine...so if you add some flavour there, I don’t think they will have a problem with that. Respondent 2 emphasized, “The idea is creating images of what theatre is in someone else head wherever they are, so that they might be interested in it.

The fourth solution was creating the theatre hype. Respondent 1 said that “if you can create the theatre hype and lots of people talk about it... using people like Mbongeni Ngema, who are a brand; you can be able to draw audience. Respondent 3 added, “We should make sure that whoever we call is going to attract the whites, blacks, Indians and etc. He argues that, if we *gonna* bring Mbongeni Ngema, do you think whites will go again to that theatre? I mean how many Indians know Sarafina? So we should make sure that whatever we are marketing should have everyone. Respondent 1 added, “We must break these barriers and find ways to mingle with everyone and we cut that segregation that say I’m creating this for my own...you know? In the other hand, Respondent 2 emphasized that “but that can only happen when you learn about other people’s cultures- what excites them, how your people reacts to certain things that you find interesting.

The fifth solution was marketing. Respondent 4 shared that “what I have noticed about marketing that is related to theatre is that we do direct marketing- things like publicity stuff where you see like banners hanging on the walls in theatres, and that is targeting certain

people...*Ya...* arts practitioners....but some, you know what I mean? You do not find other people. I do not see a lot of theatre marketing”. The sixth solution in Respondent 1’s words was that “we need to use the medium of TV and stop being selective of whom they are marketing themselves to. Because they turn to market people that already know what theatre is. So they just need to break those boundaries. Respondent 3 argued: “theatres...they shouldn’t be desperate. For instance, in South Africa there’s that thing of rape...rape...rape, if they gonna say this week we are talking about rape; you find that five people who are there are rape survivors...and they went there. And you find that what you are doing is like you are walking on them- like your character... you just doing nonsense. So quality is important”.

#### **4.1.4 Findings from theatre managers/ Theatre Experts**

Theatre attendance in Johannesburg has decreased with audience shying away from theatre performances. With the increased population of people with no knowledge of what theatre is and a large amount of young people who are attached and attracted to social media, home theatre entertainment and other activities that keep them in the comfort of their homes, there has been the unavoidable increase of theatre attendance in Johannesburg. Lack of theatre knowledge in Johannesburg and theatre awareness as identified in this section plays a major part to the contribution of theatre attendance. In this case the view of theatres and factors of attendance and audience development in Johannesburg or in the South African context is presented. This section was guided by the following questions:

1. What is the view of theatres in Johannesburg or in South Africa at large?
2. What motivates audiences to go to theatres in Johannesburg?
3. What motivates audience to lack interest in theatre in Johannesburg?
4. How can theatres develop audiences in Johannesburg?
5. What are the useful tools of audience development?

These questions were selected in order to frame the main research question of the study as highlighted in the first chapter of the research and also to assist the study in answering the research question.

## **The View of theatre in Johannesburg**

When interviewed in the Market Theatre on November 12<sup>th</sup> 2013, Mike Van Graan<sup>3</sup> highlighted that: “I think South African theatres have a lot to learn like how to go about marketing. A lot of theatres spend a lot of money and resources on what is generally called publicity. Putting up a poster, doing adverting, and newspaper and putting on a banner....but they don’t do much on marketing - which is much about building a relationship with the audiences and understanding what makes them buy a ticket to come and see a play. For instance, internationally, there is much work, effort and resources that are put into building a database of theatregoers and having direct audiences. But in S.A we rely only on publicity to build an audience; we do not do enough marketing”.

In his own words, “South Africa has some active theatre, but the problem with them is that they do not engage enough and theatre education is also a problem. In this case, “marketing is important because people need to understand that there’s a theatre play happening, and there need to be a way on how to market the product to a particular market for that particular theatre piece”.

According to Mike Van Graan, “theatre plays are creative products that are created by directors and players....that is if you want to use creative industries in this course those are the products that needs to be sold to audiences. Theatres and festivals are the shops for where those creative products are sold to the audience”.

## **Effectiveness of Government policy on audience development**

According to Mike Van Graan, the governments make money available to subsidized theatre and leave it all to the theatres to develop audience. But very little is done in terms of making resources available for these theatres. For examples, for schools to come and see shows, the government should be helping to develop audiences. Some provinces are very reluctant for schools to actually leave during schools times to come see the shows or the element of theatre productions to come to the school because that is taken away from education time. I think that is

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<sup>3</sup> Mike Van Graan is the “executive director of the Africa Arts Institute and the former secretary of the Arterial Network, a continent- wide network engaged in the African creative sector. He serves as a UNESCO Technical Expert on the convention on the protection and promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression. (MVG Productions, 2012), Visit: [www.mikevangraan.co.za](http://www.mikevangraan.co.za) for more information.

the primary way in which the government can contribute to audience development in a school level. And have Government subsidies to have Theatre companies to put plays on theatre, but also go to schools, community hall, to go to churches and go to other places where people are – and introduce theatre to them and expose them so that they begin to think that this is something they should be doing.

Alison Green (Assitej Johannesburg's coordinator) outlined, "There's little support from the government and no enough acknowledgement of the work theatres do. And also there's no enough funding from the government for people to actually do the work".

### **What motivate people to go to theatre in Johannesburg?**

According to Hardie<sup>4</sup> (2013) interview in this study, audiences are motivated by "hearing someone say that they love something and that it has really impacted them. And this mean that word of mouth is very important. Subject matter- whatever reason is intriguing for people or something that reminds them of what they have read or something that seems like is relevant to them. The actors will have to be in television. Important stories- such as the Mandela musical, that people can relate to and are important to them; and an unusual, interesting or different theatre styles that can grab people.

According to Sack (2013), word of mouth will bring people to the theatre- where there are vibes and entertainment; people in Joburg listen to word of mouth". In addition, Van Graan (2013) put emphasis on word of mouth as being a more effective way in which motivates audiences to attend theatre. His words are "I think word of mouth- if someone told them to go, told them who is in it, who is directing it and who the actors are, where it is happening and the theatre experience they have. For instance, it is a cool place to be? Is it comfortable and whether they will grow the experience when they go there". In a personal note, Green<sup>5</sup> (2013) the coordinator of Assitej Johannesburg<sup>6</sup> stipulated that, "she goes to the theatre because of friends who will be

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<sup>4</sup> Yvette Hardie is a "South African theatre producer, director, educator, and writer; active in the world of theatre and performances, with a particular focus on theatre for children and young people. She initiated the launch of ASSITEJ South Africa in 2007, bringing together theatre practitioners with a common passion for theatre for children and young people. She serves as the chairperson of Assitej South Africa". Visit: <http://www.assitej-international.org/about/executive-committee/yvette-hardie/> for more information

<sup>5</sup> Alison Green is the coordinator for theatre4youth in ASSITEJ Gauteng

<sup>6</sup> Assitej South Africa is a registered NPO, which operates as a networking platform for people working with or interested in theatre for children and young people. It aims to promote and foster high quality theatre for children

performing....because of the community. It is more awarding and a more engaging experience than a movie because it is live and it is real. It's more live and real for me than a movie".

### **What motivates audience to lack interest in theatres in Johannesburg?**

The Market Theatre Audience Development manager (Anthony Ezeoke)<sup>7</sup> outlined that: "there are so many challenges that stop people from attending theatre. The first motive is that people do not have an idea what theatre is. People think that theatre is too expensive. People do not see theatre as a source of entertainment; so they rather go to other forms of entertainment. People do not go to the theatre on the basis of economy (affordability). The second motive is the lack of the knowledge of what the theatre is. The third motive could be the theatre location- where theatre is located. For instance, people find it very difficult to even come to the Market theatre, while people do not go to Windybrow theatre because it is in Hillbrow. And the kind of show that theatres show- most people will not come to the theatre because of the shows that are shown.

In the other hand Van Graan (2013) relates, "There are a lot of people who don't have resources to go to the theatre. Theatre is not part of their tradition, it is not part of their culture, and it is not part of how they were brought up. He encapsulated that a lot of people in this country are just poor (they do not earn enough) or they are unemployed so that is the reason they do not go to the theatres. On that note, there is also lack of public transport for those people who live outside of the city. Another motive could be that people do not necessarily know about theatres or they go to theatre, but theatre is not something that resonates to their lives. So in this case, where theatre is of interest to people then they might make an effort to go and see it". Steven Sack adds, "People don't go to the theatre because they don't know about it and they have never experienced it. Furthermore, there are a lot of competitions from home theatre entertainments, travelling and tourism".

Lack of exposure to theatres came up as another motive that affects theatre attendance in Johannesburg. All the theatre managers and experts argue that most of the people have not had

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and young people, to raise standards within the industry, to increase access and awareness, to be an advocate for the right of every child to arts education in schools, and to build relationships within the sector locally, nationally, across the continent and globally" ([www.assitej.org.za](http://www.assitej.org.za)). Visit: <http://www.assitej.org.za/wabout.php> for more information about Assitej

<sup>7</sup> Antony Ezeoke is the audience development manager in the Market Theatre, who is responsible for developing audiences in the Market theatre, in Newtown.

exposure to theatre when they were young, or in their families or at school. Steven Sack highlighted that “if you were not taken to the theatre when you were young by your parents or your teachers at school and you were not exposed to it. So it is unlikely that you will think of theatre as something that is of interest to them”. Green outlined, “I think audiences are lazy. There is no willingness to engage emotionally. I think that there is more money [...] for instance, a movie; people are more ready to pay for a movie because they are aware of it. And also the values of theatre- people do not want to pay 50 rand for a theatre.

To further highlight motives of lack of theatre attendance, issues like ticket prices came up in process of the research. It was found by the study from Hardie that ticket prices are a problem in this effect. In her words, I mean, “weighing up what you spend and how you spend it. Her example was, “people who buy alcohol, they know the results of the alcohol. They know they are going to be relaxed, and have fun with their friends. As a result, they are willing to spend their money on alcohol than buy a theatre ticket; because they don’t really know what they are really going to get from it”. She further emphasized, “In South Africa living in so much poverty and economy issues, and people are striving to survive. If a person is living in a disadvantage family for example, it is more unlikely that they will buy a theatre ticket. But for people who have a little bit of money, the factors could be distance. It could also be lack of knowledge about where theatres are. The primary factor is the issue of not knowing what theatre is”

Ezeoke (2013) viewed language as another motive of theatre non- attendance. His words were that “you find that people don’t come to the theatre because of language. There are barriers in terms of Ethnicity...in times people do not come to the theatre because of colour and what is shown and what kinds of stories are shown. For instance, some people now do not want to see apartheid shows so they do not want to be reminded of what has happened some time ago. When interviewed, Hardie argued, “sometimes people don’t come to the theatre, even when the theatre is right there. For example, the Soweto theatre, a wonderful building right there for audiences, but it is not really being utilized. Because it is not advertised- advertisement have not being developed. So it is then when you have given a person a taste of what theatre is, they will not come to the theatre.

In the context of the Wits Theatre, Wits theatre Director stipulated, “There is no easy open access to the theatre because the theatre is based inside the University. And furthermore there is



lack of culture of acknowledging the importance of cultural activities”. In terms of attendance, it was found that the Wits theatre accumulate 20 % of audience in Drama and 40 % of audiences in music. In her own words: “it’s even difficult to get art students to come see their own productions”. And what she views to be the problem concerning lack of attendance in other theatres in Johannesburg is the “environment in Johannesburg (high risk of crime). And there is also a lot of competition in Johannesburg, no transportation to these places, the increasing uses of social media-people are reluctant in having communication with people...there is no interactions between people. Unemployment emerged as an issue and time constraints- people are busy, strained and over worked. Marketing is also a problem. Politics of space: the perceptions that people have about theatre spaces. Lack of value: if a person doesn’t value art, he or she doesn’t see a need to pay for it”.

### **How can theatres develop Audiences in Johannesburg?**

#### *Ways to develop audiences*

Mike Van Graan highlighted that “Audience development is ongoing – you do it all the time, you don’t do it only when you have a play, you do it all the time. You are constantly gathering information about potential audiences... for instance, who are your potential audience? They are both individuals who might buy your tickets but they are also people who are part of corporate.

Hardie said that audience development is “kind of a word of mouth and a peer gathering of people... about engaging more with the public to get them to come and be in the theatre and marking people through marketing. Furthermore, Ezeoke added, “Audience development is about sales”. For example, “for a sales man to maintain audiences, one have to constantly be in touch with that person, speak to him, and offer him free tickets even if he doesn’t have the money; invite him to other events, opening nights which you know is basically by invitation. And keeping the relationship by calling him even if it’s not to sell him tickets, but just to see how they are doing”.

In order to go about the process audience development, Steven Sack summarized that; firstly “you look at the production, and then identify the product. Secondly, identify your market- who are they? Where are they? And how will they get to the theatre? Thirdly, once you have identified the potential audience, you now try to market them”. Fourthly, one needs to

understand what your premise is with respect to audience development in a sense that how do you frame the problem? To know what the problem is and to what extent is the problem. For instance, if you are in Soweto and you are able to be in the Soweto theatre; the logic here would be to run your programming during the day when it is safe for young girls and boys and young people to go to the theatre. So you will have to look at the problem of the city and take theatre to the community. You will also need to have mobile theatre to actually take theatre directly to the community. In the areas where mobility is a problem, then the key policy will be mobile solutions for audience development.

Accordingly, Sack encapsulated that an audience development plan for Johannesburg needs to have a sort of a phase strategy because you are dealing with people who are unfamiliar with theatre, but would love theatre. Having a mobile programme will reach this people and they would get connected. In terms of developing audiences in Johannesburg, one needs to deal with issues of safety. For instance, the Gauteng Tourism has put the city site bus in operation. What they do is the bus takes tourist to various locations. If they discover that the area is not safe, they go and talk to the police and engage with them in that local area , so that the problem is addressed and tourist will be safe in that area. In the same way, if the Wits Theatre its constituency is students living around Hillbrow or Braamfontein; if it's not safe for female students to move around during the night, that becomes a very easy project to deal with because it is localized. In this case, you will need to engage with the Braamfontein improvement district and the metro-police in that locality and identify safe route, so that people may safely move to an area'.

When interviewed, Mike Van Graan viewed the process of audience development in two ways. According to him, there is theatre audience development and market development. He explained how he uses the two to develop audiences for his work: "I kind of see two things, theatre's Audience development and Market development. Sometimes when you are developing audiences, audience might be people who see your work but do not pay for it, so they are an audience. It might be that I go to the shopping mall to do a play there...people will not come to see my play, they will see an extract of it and so they will be interested...they will be stimulated as audiences".

He added, “in terms of Market development...am developing people who are prepared to pay the ticket to come see my play, and that is kind of different. He further argued, “For me... if I have to use both audience development and market development in the same way, I would say it is about developing a market who have the resources to able to pay tickets to see your play. To help you generate income to pay for the production or probably make a profit that I will use to pay for the next play”. Hardie mentioned that: “A very good example of audience development is ArtCape, where there is a very big education development, community development and other art development programmes.

In order to develop audiences, there are strategies that were obtained from the interviews with theatre managers. The first key basic way to do audience development (as suggested by Hardie) is that “you have to start with young people. Introduce people to theatre in an early age... [...] If you target them in the age of 25, it is already late because they have decided how they want to spend their money- on shopping and so on. So for me the most fundamental audience development starts with young children. If you work with children in a young age, you can develop their cathartic to pay attention, stimulate their interest, and by that they can begin to understand theatre as some kind of language. And that’s what really needs to be done”.

Van Graan also highlighted, “you can develop audience by establishing a relationship with someone who have a corporate business and convince them to buy tickets for their staff and Audience development is something that is ongoing... in order for you to have a database of who to market a particular work to and when that work happens. In addition, Hardie suggested that if one can put theatre in places that are accessible, where people are familiar with, e.g. churches, community centres, community halls, audience will get used to it and immediately it becomes something that people are more likely to experience and are more likely to go. The third key strategy is based on Education. In Alison’s words, “there has to be education after all, so that kids are made aware of theatre. And I think that there need to be a different strategy around inviting more experience for people and people are drawn close to that engagement and experience. Sack added that it is important to “work with schools and education departments and arrange school visits.

According to Hardie, “watching a theatre performances demands energy and stamina. So in order to develop audiences, you need to find ways to excite people. For example, by exposing them to

something that is of good quality. Another thing, there need to be an effective marketing that is carefully designed to work with the public. A primary advice would be, theatre needs to start at school”. For someone who has never being in a theatre or never being taught about theatre in school or being exposed to it, it is difficult for them to consider going to the theatre. In a personal note, Ezeoke (The Market Theatre Audience Development Manager) underline his way of developing audience: “to attract and build new relationships with a theatre non-attender is that I wait for an appealing show or a very good show like Woza Albert and I use it to pull a non-theatre attender. So what I do is I give them two free tickets to come watch the performance.

### **Tools of audience development**

The first tool was, “Word of mouth” and it appeared to be the most dominant tool that managers observed to be working in audience development. In Mike Van Graan’s words: “People don’t go to the theatre because they have heard a review or because they have seen a poster or have heard something on the radio. They go because they have heard someone say... you really need to go see this play”. He explained, “The most important way in which people get to know about the play and which they may make a decision to see a play is through word of mouth. Word of mouth can reach people. He pointed out that his research on audience development proved that word of mouth is almost two or three times more effective than the next key driver of why people go to the theatre”. Steven Sack added that the useful tool of audience development is “getting people or inviting some people or people who will invite their friends to come watch the show for free. This means that you offer them free tickets in exchange of getting them to chat or tweet with other people about the shows”

There are so many tools to use in audience development. Other tools that emerged in the research were the use of telephone, social media, emails, SMSes and so on. Ezeoke added that, “I use telephone, I use email, I use face to face communication- telling and asking people... are you aware that there is so and so show coming in the market theatre? But the most important tool I use is email and the telephone. Because with Posters and flyers you may not develop audience- you are not talking to them. So they may just look at it and throw it and not pitch”. SMSes and emails were found as more effective than general social media by Mike Van Graan.

For Mike Van Graan, the strategy of “audience development is getting his primary audience-people who have seen his previous plays to come in the first week of his next play. He added that he offers them all kinds of incentives, like free tickets, free books, and an opportunity to get a free coffee with a ticket from his shows. Furthermore, this can be done in “building up relationships with other institutions where your audiences can benefit from coming to see your show”. Other key strategies he suggested are “a database of people who liked your work- to target and building the database and up the strategies to get as many people as you can to come and see your play so that they put the word out there and the rest of the show will take care of itself.

Hardie drew attention to Monitoring and evaluation as an important tool of audience development. “I think monitoring and evaluation is essential. You have to know people who are coming to the theatres and hang on them. You also have to see who is not coming and try to work out why they are not coming. You need to have audience demographics in order to understand them (this is by knowing who the potential audiences for the theatres are). Furthermore, and develop relationships with sponsors. Being partners with sponsors is an important tool. Engaging with potential audiences and making them understand the language of theatre”.

#### **4.1.5 Findings from the researchers observations**

Observation on theatre attendance in Johannesburg was conducted in four places: the Market theatre, Newtown Park, Joburg theatre, the Joburg theatre park, and the Wits theatre. There was maximum observation in theatre awareness and theatre attendance in these areas. It was observed that the population of people who sit in the Joburg theatre park and the Newtown Park enjoy sitting in the park other than visiting the theatre. For many, they find the park relaxing other than walking into a theatre for a tour. The researcher found that the reason that results in such behaviours is due to lack of awareness of what these building are and what they house. Majority of people were observed to be passing by the market theatre and the Joburg theatre without an attempt to enter the theatres for interest sake. In the Wits theatre, however, students hardly spare time to attend theatre shows or their own productions. The majority of students however spend

time with their friend inside the theatre next to the theatre cafés, outside the theatre on the bench and the smoking zone; other than inside the theatre itself.

Depending on the shows presented in the theatres, the type of audience who attend theatre and their attendance in theatres varies. For instance, during Sibongile Khumalo's music live performance at the Market theatre (on the 8<sup>th</sup> Of November 2013), the researcher observed that the show was attended by mostly older audience. It was attended in a great number and the majority of people who attended were those who knew her music and also love and value her music. The audience responded well to the performance. In the other hand, audience who attended the Joburg theatre (Space.com) during the UJ poetry show was filled with young people who have the love for poetry and understand the poetry language. Most of the audience were there to support a friend or because they were invited by a friend. Whilst in the Wits theatre, the attendance of wits students was low.

The researcher also observed that the theatre space, performance settings, audience behaviours and attitude towards theatre performances. Some theatre spaces were observed to be small and audience seemed to complain about the space. Audiences were found to enjoy theatre when they can freely be themselves when in the theatre. Even though there are rules to be obeyed during theatre performances, such as "No walking out during a performance, no video or snapshot and making noise", but some audiences were found not to abide by the rules. Some would respond to a performance with a loud voice, walk out of the theatre during a performance, and even take videos when theatre ushers are not looking. It was therefore observed that the audiences enjoy theatre when they are given a space to be themselves and their response to theatre depends on the comfort they get when attending a theatre show; but if what is being showcased is not appealing to them, their attitude towards theatre becomes negative.

#### **4.1.6 Theatre for Transformation**

Theatre is an important tool of transformation and development wherein audiences, actors, directors, producers and managers undergo personal development in some areas of their lives. In this section, we discuss the concept of theatre for transformation under 3 sub-questions:

- What impact does theatre have in terms of constructing change or development in society? (including actors, directors or managers)
- What kinds of community based programmes does theatre offer to lead the community to social and personal change?
- How is the audience involved in theatre's outreach programmes? How does the audience respond?

To find out more about theatre for transformation or development, a research was conducted in the Hillbrow theatre, and the Market theatre lab

### **Impact of theatre for development in the society**

When interviewed, the Hillbrow Project coordinator outlined, “aaah the impact that Hillbrow theatre has in terms of constructing change in the community or the society is that of a form of healing.” “The theatre offers the society a theatre for healing, wherein we allow the community to bring their own issues to us to be addressed in the theatre. He goes further to say that “ we use their own issues, and we provide a professional counsellor who is also part of the Hillbrow community to help the community or persons who brought the issue on how to deal with the issue (Just in case something get out of hand). In tackling the community's issues, we had situations where in people started to open up with regards to the issues that affects them.” Moreover, “We have seen young people develop positively and some going through a change through self-awareness and realization of issues they never thought affect the society they live in.” To bring about change in the community, he adds, “At the present moment, each time when there is an issue affecting everyone in the country, we turn to dwell on that issue and then on dwelling on that issue we also try by all means to express it that way.”

In addition to the impact theatre has in the society in terms of constructing change, Vaughan (Market Theatre Laboratory Education officer) highlights, “For the students who come here...I think...if they did not come here, they would not have a place to go to develop their skills and to further their dreams of becoming involved in theatre or in the performing arts industry. And their voices are particularly important to the South African landscape because they are young black

people who had no strong voice or who have had their voices deliberately silenced. So they are given the skills and the platform to make work that speaks to their experience of South Africa... and I think that is something that is important, and contribute to the South African Performing art and theatre industry.”

Vaughan adds, “For the community groups, I think it’s a vital opportunity to get into the professional theatre field- to take the work seriously and what they do seriously. Obviously, it gives them an opportunity to be interactive, respected..., and to have influential theatre makers, who can give them advice, motivates and inspire them. Moreover, on a practical level, it gives them an opportunity for their work to be seen, to compete and for people to communicate in each other’s work [...] Eeeh, to learn more generally about theatre...it creates a platform for communication and engagement for the community.”

### **Theatre for development in the society through theatre programmes**

According to (Phakathi- Hillbrow theatre project coordinator) the programmes that the theatre offers are community based. In his words, “we have the Inner-city High school festival where we focus on 35 schools, this is our main focus [...] what we do is that we have a group of facilitators whom we send to these schools to facilitate drama and teach the learners aspects of theatre. Moreover, we give a theme for the schools to dwell on for the purpose of the festival.... and in the end, we normally host an annual end of year production wherein we select best students.” In addition, we have outreach foundation where we outreach to those people who come to our theatre and we show them a theatrical performance and after the performance...we have a post-show discussion wherein we allow them to ask questions and for people wanting to know more....we always have people around who are ready to answer their questions.” He adds that, another theatre for development programme they offer is the “take a child to theatre today”...a campaign that edge the parents and the community to take children to the theatre in a young age.”

In the Market theatre Lab, the Education officer states, “We are very strongly anti-theatre. So I have no interest to educate students about some pre-designed method...you know, how they



should be leaving their lives, especially to re-engage with social issues. Nevertheless, we have the Community Theatre Festival. In her words, “since the beginning of this year, we have been having showcase of work in the weekends. Eeeh... and the ones with the most potential from that are selected/have been selected to participate in the Community festival [...] and that is practically an all-day event for 7 days- where groups perform every day and get feedback and ....the strongest group from that experience get to participate in “Zwakala Festival. The play that goes to Zwakala Festival gets a run at the Market Theatre as a professional show.” Moreover, “through the community festival that we offer to the community, the community theatre groups turn to make theatre about what is happening in their communities. They engage with community issues automatically.” She further adds that although the lab does not educate students how to live their lives, they encourage students to engage with what they want to talk about and what they think theatre should be talking about. For example, the play we took this year to Grahamstown was about student’s protest- being excluded from universities for being unable to pay fees. Therefore, those are deeply social issues very much about young people and their lives now.”

### **Audience participation and response to theatre works**

Phakathi, when interviewed states that, “The audiences involvement have been very effective in the theatre. We have had parents from the community bring their children to the theatre for the after school programmes...we could say that, there is a great support in the community. In terms of performance, some audiences respond positively and some respond negatively...especially if we were dealing with an issue that someone has experienced and the issue was dealt differently from how the person has experienced it, the response turn to be negative”. In the other hand, the Market theatre lab Education officer outlines that, “based on the community festival, which the institution host, audience experiences vary in terms of community involvement and response. She states that, “certainly attendance in the festival vary....so it’s not always well attended....sometimes it isn’t and sometimes it is [...] usually what happens is that...it is not well attended in the morning like in the afternoon. In addition, it depends on the play...But there are some plays that touch, affect the audience, and they really engage with and get a very vocal warm response and other plays do not because they are just not good”

## CHAPTER 5

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### **Introduction**

The analysis presented in this section was inferred from the literature and the findings of the study and analysed thematically. According to Patton and Cochran (2002: 24), “a thematic analysis is the type of analysis that looks across all the data to identify the common issues that recur, and identify the main themes that summarizes all the views you have collected.” The aim of this analysis was to categorize commonalities and differences in what motivates audience to attend theatre or lack of interest to attend and audience development in the context of Johannesburg.

#### **The view of theatre in Johannesburg**

This study found that theatre in Johannesburg is considered something you do for fun; that is a source of entertainment. Even so, it has not been doing much of attracting and contributing to the society because of its lack of impact to the audience. Literature described theatre in Johannesburg to be vibrant with a lot of innovative activities to offer, such as dances, drama and so forth. In this study, theatres in Johannesburg were found to be struggling with marketing. As interviewed, Van Graan (2013) highlighted that “theatres have a lot to learn about how to go about marketing. A lot of money is spent on publicity than marketing”. In turn this is a problem due to the observation that theatres in Johannesburg are not visible and easily accessible.

#### **Government policies on audience development**

It was found by this research study that with regards to the government, there are very little initiatives done in making resources available for theatres. Mike Van Graan highlighted that “for schools to come and see shows, the government should be helping to develop audiences. Some provinces are very reluctant for schools to actually leave during schools times to come and see the shows or allow the element of theatre productions to come to the school because it will interfere with the school education schedule. In the interview, he added, “I think that is the primary way in which the government can contribute to audience development in a school level”.

This study demonstrated that there should at least be government subsidies that will enable theatre companies not only to put plays in theatres, but to put them in schools, community hall, and churches; where people are located.

Green (when interviewed in 2013), also emphasized, “there is little support from the government and no enough acknowledgement of the work theatres do. And also there is no enough funding from the government for people to actually do the work”. In this case, it can be assumed that there is lack of effective government policies that actively encourage and dominates the importance of audience development and theatre attendance in Johannesburg. This study therefore, summarizes that there is insufficient support that is given from the government to encourage audience development.

### **Why people go to theatre**

In this section, the researcher identified codes/key drivers and themes that were grouped to reflect similarities, differences, and commonalities in the literature and findings; to summarize why people go to theatres in Johannesburg or lack interest to attend (see table 1 & 2).

**Table 1: why people go to theatre in Johannesburg**

<b>CODES</b> <b>Key driver</b>	<b>LITERATURE</b> <b>Themes emerged</b>	<b>FINDINGS</b> <b>Themes emerged</b>
1. Social satisfaction	Entertainment, fun, live, magic, passion, relaxation, and exploration	Entertainment, enjoyment of art, socialization, escapism, experiencing something new, and experiencing live performance.
2. Personality	Preferences or taste, behaviour, attitude, personal influence,	Lifestyle, taste, and the value of art
3. Familiarity	Knowledge of text, and absorption of knowledge	Knowledge of actors, plays, directors, writers, friends
4. Influence	Word of mouth; emotions,	Friends: lack of people to go

	intellectual challenge, networking, and need to be like others.	with, love, passion, experience, hearing someone say that they love something & has impacted them
5. Education	Understanding, learning from the past, learning about human problems, development of knowledge, and intellectual enrichment.	Catharsis, language, development, learning, to be informed, getting real life knowledge, to understand reality, to be stimulated, and value.
6. Content		Important stories, unusual or different theatre style, and stories that are relevant to them.

During this process, the researcher read the data, taking notes and highlighting themes as they emerge in the literature. This was done in order to understand data and also to identify its relevancy to the research question being presented in the study. Six codes: social satisfaction, personality, familiarity, personal influence, education, and content emerged in the analysis. Amongst the themes, the first four codes/key drivers: social satisfaction, personality, familiarity/awareness, and personal influences were identified to be the ones that dominated in explaining why people go to theatre in Johannesburg.

**Social satisfaction** appeared to be a dominant theme in the literature. This is an individual's need to be entertained with the rhythm that brings fun, passion, magic, relaxation, enjoyment and a new experience to one's liking. This is the need that one seek to be excited enough to escape from an everyday life to the world of imagination and be satisfied.

**Personality** is another repeated theme traced from the literature and findings. It generates personal twist and has to do with one's way of living: lifestyle, attitude, behaviour, taste in things, how they define themselves, the way they perceive or view things and the kind of activities they engage into.

**Familiarity**- the knowledge and awareness of theatre appeared to be individual's persuasion of theatre attendance. This refers to exposure and being familiar with the work of theatre and actors.

**Influence** emphasizes the impact that persuades an individual to make a decision to do or take part in something. It stimulates an interest in one's head. The influence is from hearing something from someone (word of mouth), friends, emotional needs (the need to be like others), or from networking. Where interaction occurs, influence is generated to impact one's life.

To put together the literature and findings, a table of codes/key drivers and themes from all participants were formed (see table 2). This process revealed 4 major themes and 3 minor themes and other additional themes that were revealed from the findings.

**Table 2: why people lack interest in theatre in Johannesburg**

<b>CODES/CATEGORIES</b> <b>Key drivers</b>	<b>LITERATURE</b> <b>Themes emerged</b>	<b>FINDINGS</b> <b>Themes emerged</b>
<b>MAJOR KEY DRIVERS</b>		
1. Economy	Lack of public transport, affordability, and ticket prices.	Affordability, lack of public transport, strained and over worked, high-ticket prices, unemployment, poverty, crime, and struggle for survival.
2. Perception	Theatre is perceived expensive.	Theatre is boring; theatre is limited to certain people; theatre is for old people; theatre is for whites; waste of time and time consuming; theatre is expensive; there is nothing interesting; and the public do not see it as a source of entertainment.
3. Familiarity	Audiences are absent due to familiarity.	Awareness, knowledge of theatre, confusion , lack of theatre information, and visibility
4. Education	Lack of understanding.	Lack of theatre education, exposure, no opportunity, accessibility, no resources and facilities.
<b>MINOR KEY DRIVERS</b>		
5. Competition	Theatre has to compete with film and television for audiences	Joburg has many activities, we are competing with issues of health, education, poverty, service delivery, and corruption
6. Personality	Lack of interest	Lifestyle, laziness, ignorance, no passion, not interested, personal interest, no willingness to engage, taste, and no interaction.

7. Location	Theatres are not located near the people	Distance, theatres are located in Metropolitan areas; theatres are not near the people
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**Different themes were identified from the findings (see table below)**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Themes emerged</b>
Isolation	A feeling of not belonging
Environment	Not welcoming, seating capacity restriction
Race and ethnicity	Language and colour, theatre is not part of their culture, tradition; it is not part of how they were brought up.
Content	Shift of cultural performances, people do not want to see stories that remind them of the past, poor storylines, performance and productions.
Theatre management	Poor marketing, poor advertising, and no engagement with the audience.

Table 2 emphasizes themes that emerged in the literature and findings. The analysis explored issues that lead to lack of theatre attendance in Johannesburg. And found that it was linked with economic issues, one's perception of theatre, familiarity, education, competition, personality and the location of theatres in the inner city of Johannesburg. Although the themes varied according to individuals understanding and values of theatre, the conclusion of the data captured in this research is that decisions not to attend a theatre performance are based on economic issues, knowledge regarding theatre, perceptions towards theatre, and lack of theatre education. However, more importantly, theatre education is needed to attract, entice, and develop new theatre lovers.

**Table 3: Audience development in theatre in Johannesburg**

<b>Ways of developing audience</b>		
<b>CODES/CATEGORIES</b>	<b>LITERATURE</b> <b>Themes emerged</b>	<b>FINDINGS</b> <b>Themes emerged</b>
1. Partnership	Consultations, stakeholders, local community, work with teachers and local authorities.	Communications, invitation, keep relationship with them by calling them only to check how they are doing.
2. Research	Develop questions asking them what interests them through workshops, focus groups or meetings.	Take time to talk to your people/target, look at who is attending and why, and target them specifically, target the ones who do not show up.
3. Accessibility	Improve designs and amenities, make your organisation accessible with facilities that makes people's needs, give them confidence to explore, improve information and interpretation, and provide facilities e.g. seats, toilets etc.	Provide resources and facilities to young people to do their work, bombard people with interesting activities, and create an environment for those who love theatre.
4. Awareness	Take heritage to the heritage, put displays offsite in community centres, hospitals, and shopping centres.	Take theatre to places that are accessible to people, e.g. churches, community halls, community centres, etc.



5. Impact	Make it relevant: finding different stories, which strike a chord with new audiences and stimulate existing audiences to visit again.	Put an impact in audience lives, creating an image of what theatre is in someone else head, stimulation, and impression of theatre
6. Education	Develop school programmes	Take theatre to schools
<b>Tools of audience development</b>		
1. Monitoring and evaluation	Review and analysis	‘you have to see who is coming and why’
2. Audience research	Conduct a quantitative research or qualitative: to identify why audience attend your events	Getting to know audience: demographics, and geographic
3. Relationship	Follow up, communication, invitation, partnerships with other institutions, collaboration, and appreciation,	Relationship with sponsors, engagement with potential audiences, and partnerships with institutions where your audiences can benefit from
4. Education	Educate your artists and audiences.	Take theatre to schools, and expose theatre to audiences at an early age.
5. Awareness	Take art to the audiences, and put activities offsite.	Take theatre to the community, and expose them
6. Networking	Market what you have to offer using technology and social networking and social media: Podcasts, twitter, radio stations, emails, websites , Crowdsourcing, LinkedIn	Tell people about shows using word of mouth, telephone, emails, SMSes, TV, radio etc.

Based on the question concerning, what can be done to ensure that there is synergy between audiences and theatres? This study revealed 6 themes and 6 audience development tools, which be discussed later in chapter 6 (the discussion section).

## TTHEATRE AND CHANGE/TRANSFORMATION

**Table 4: Impact of theatre for change/development in the society**

<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>LITERATURE Themes emerged</b>	<b>FINDINGS Themes emerged</b>
1. Impact	Expression of human condition, and portrays opinions, address problems/issues, analyse problems, contribute to audience's rights to communicate, and reinforce values of the society.	Forum theatre, discussions, and healing, pose questions about the society, tackle community issues, engagement on issues, encourage self-expression, and communicate community issues on stage.
2. Change	Group building and sharing, society recreates themselves, social confrontation, social change, a need to generate new conventions.	Society opens up, interaction, self-awareness, realization, realize dreams, personal development, discussions, and healing
3. Response	Participation of audiences increase and decrease; Issues discussions, and confrontation of issues.	Audiences respond positively to performances and sometimes negative on issues, community support for theatre organisations and theatre productions, participation and involvement

## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to investigate what motivates audience to attend theatre shows or lack interest to attend in Johannesburg. In this chapter, the findings of the research in view of the research question will be merged and presented in relation to the literature review. The chapter will discuss why people go to theatre - audience motives in attending theatre, why people do not go to theatres in Johannesburg and the aspects of audience development in Johannesburg.

#### **6.1 Why people go to theatre in Johannesburg**

Literature has highlighted that in South Africa, audiences go to theatre to fulfil their social needs; and that has to do with entertainment, fun, the love of art, and the magic of live performances (Antrobus, 2009). As it is stipulated in the study of Antrobus (2009), in this study audience motives to attend theatre in Johannesburg starts with a social need. However, the social needs exploited in the finding of this study is described as “social satisfaction”, which is associated with the enjoyment of art, the need to socialize with other people, and to experience a new creation of art in theatre and also an experience of live performance as presented on stage.

In the itinerary of the study, word of mouth emerged as an intriguing motive of why audiences go to theatre in Johannesburg. This study demonstrated that not only do audiences in Johannesburg go to theatre for social satisfactions, but for personal satisfaction also plays a pivotal part in getting people to the theatre in Johannesburg. This is due to the persuasion that is embedded by close friends, family or colleagues, who play parts in convincing them to attend theatre; either with the passion they possess or the love they have developed for theatre. The study regards word of mouth as a major motive for theatre attendance in Johannesburg; which primarily emphasizes an exchange of information from one person to another, forming a channel whereby information is distributed through one person-to-person interaction. It is then through the inter communication- hearing that someone say that they love something and listening to someone saying they must go to theatre that a person eventually decide to go to theatre. And the

study refers this channel as the power of a voice- the ability to stimulate ones decision through persuasion.

This study also found that audiences in Johannesburg are also driven by the needs that have to do with knowledge and education. The discussion therefore highlights audience need for education as a key for intellectual enrichment. Snowball (quoted in Antrobus, 2009) indicated in the literature that motivations for theatre attendance in South Africa vary with age, education, and jobs. As a result, audiences with lower educational level are influenced by educational motives. In the context of Johannesburg, it was found by this study that audiences are motivated by the knowledge of actors and their work, the knowledge of someone who is performing and the knowledge of friends who are in the play. And the ability to develop knowledge in this sense is through education. Thus, for Johannesburg audiences, attending theatre is a learning curve that provides them with the knowledge of actors/artist in the play, getting real life knowledge from what it is heard in a daily life; and thereby developing an understanding of reality.

## **6.2 Why people do not go theatre in Johannesburg**

This study supported the concept that accentuates the fact that there is a massive decrease of theatre attendance in South Africa. In the study of Hardie (2011) there is an indication that approximately 65% of people in South Africa do not know that theatre exists; they have never being in a theatre space. As in the study of Hardie (2011), theatre attendance in Johannesburg has being found by this study to be low.

The study has established that audience's lack of interest is driven by insufficient theatre awareness in Johannesburg, lack of exposure, and inadequate theatre education, personality, lack of personal influences (not having someone to go with), public transportation, theatre locations and so forth. Out of this factors, Awareness, theatre exposure, lack of education and public transportation have being reported by theatre non- attenders and theatre experts as major issues that hinder people/ - audiences to attend theatre in Johannesburg. This was also confirmed by the study of (Meersman, 2012). These results are due to the feelings expressed by respondents towards theatre management, insufficient government support towards art education and inadequate transportation to get to these theatres.

Previous study by the National Arts Council (2010) demonstrated that there are factors concerned with economy that contribute to lack of theatre attendance in South Africa. These factors are connected with the issues of time, transportation and price - which involve the usage of money. This was also confirmed by Meersman (2012) that affordability prevents people to attend theatre in South Africa. The findings encapsulate that audience's lack of theatre attendance in Johannesburg, however, is influenced by economic issues. This is due to issues of poverty that people are dealing with, as well as unemployment, transportation to get to the theatre locations and high-ticket prices- affordability. Where money is involved theatre attendance becomes impossible to consider as something to do because of the situations people are faced with. One respondent even said that "we are hungry...people are just striving to survive", and so in the current time it has become a challenge for young people of today to get jobs.

Literature consulted in this study, Turrini (2012) highlighted that taste and expectations etc. are factors affecting an individual's decision to participate in Performing Arts. Correspondingly, attitudes, behaviours, and tastes were viewed as contributing factors to lack of theatre attendance (Nwamuo, 2006). In contrast, there are differences between the attitudes, behaviours, and taste expressed by (Turrini, 2012) and (Nwamuo 2006) in this study. This study viewed tastes, behaviours and attitudes as factors that are categorized by the aspects of individual's personality. The personality is referred to the inability to engage (laziness), ignorance, and lifestyle, lack of passion, lack of interest in theatre, change of personal interest, no willingness to engage, taste, and lack of interaction. This is supported by the statement made by one respondent in the focus group that, "if you are not into drama, you are not into drama" and personality determines how an individual behave or react towards attending theatre.

Given that change of lifestyle and personality challenge audiences in Johannesburg not to attend theatre, it has become difficult to attract audience. This is due to the issue of competition. This study found that Joburg is surrounded by challenges of competitions e.g. churches, clubs and so on. This result is supported by the study of (Meersman, 2012) which showed that theatre in South Africa has to compete with film and television for talent as well as for audiences. But in the context of Johannesburg, this study established that there are further competitions that affect theatre attendance. On this note, theatre is competing with issues of education, health, poverty,

service delivery, and corruption. These contradictory findings may be due to the observation that Johannesburg has many activities that so much people can do. Another explanation might be that economy is high and people are just trying to survive. In this case, the challenge is that there is a lot of competition from home theatre entertainment, travelling, and tourism and people can easily find things that excite them from other forms of entertainment in the city.

Theatre location may seem to be the least of a problem in terms of theatre attendance in Johannesburg, but in this study, it is viewed to be a problem. The areas where theatres are located are a problem because most of the theatres in Johannesburg are based in the city. Moreover, to some extent audiences find it difficult getting to this location- it is a challenge. Because first they have to consider the issue of transportation and safety as many shows normally take place during the evening. Moreover, it is not safe for people to walk around in the city during the evening, more especially for woman, young girls and boys.

Audiences want to be free, comfortable and to be treated well while in the theatre. One respondent expressed how weird it felt to be in the theatre space for the first time. The respondent further eluted that it feels like people are looking at you and they can see that you are new at the theatre space. This is due to theatre environment that this study established to have an impact in audience decisions not to attend theatre. In this context, the findings of this study are consistent with those of (Nwamuo, 2006) which showed that audience attitudes, behaviours, preferences, and responses are influenced by the way they are treated while they are in the theatre space. They have expectations about how the theatre environment should be. As a result, the study demonstrates that theatre environments in Johannesburg are unwelcoming to first time theatre visitors. There is a restriction in terms of the seating capacity. Moreover, these results can be due to the feeling of isolation experienced by first time theatre visitors and those who visited the theatre before.

There are differences between the findings and the literature expressed in this study. The explanation for the difference is due to the fact that the information provided in the literature is more generalized in a broader South African context, and this study specifically focuses only on Johannesburg. Due to these outcomes, lack of theatre attendance is further due to perceptions expressed by respondents that theatre is boring, and that it is made for people who have class, and that theatre is limited to certain people. Not only did perception appear to be a cause of

attendance in theatre, but also the content of stories showcased in the theatres are seen as a cause for the decline in theatre attendance. This can be read in a content that, often theatres dwell much in making theatre operate successfully and forgetting that their main focus should be on the people. Less attention is paid in what people are saying, and that is why an increase of negative perceptions about theatre growing amongst the people. This study established that a word of mouth is a strong tool of persuasion- instead of being utilized to alter influence to increase theatre attendance; it now begins to serve as a key driver to discourage people to go to theatre, because people listen and care a lot about what others are saying about a particular product. In this case, one needs to understand that one negative experience or feedback from one-person can changes or stimulate negative perceptions to many other people. This often forms groups of people who now are in the same set of mind and in this effect it becomes a challenge to change their minds about what they believe theatre to be.

In contrast to earlier results in the literature, however, no evidence of theatre management (poor marketing, advertising and lack of visibility), lack of interaction with the audiences, and issues of traditional and cultural believes were detected. These findings then add to the knowledge expressed by other studies in the literature. It was found by this study that poor theatre management drives lack of theatre attendance also. There are just no clear ways on how to keep these theatres effective and significant to the audience; that is why you find issues of lack of marketing and advertizing, poor story choices and content quality emerging and consistently showing how theatres are not well managed. This however, according to the interviews in this study could be influenced by lack of skills and proper strategies on how to manage works of theatres and getting people to these theatres. This can be explained due to the gaps that exist between audience and theatres and lack of focus on marketing and advertizing. These in turn contribute to a shift of communication with the audience. On a racial note, audiences may feel that theatre is not part of their tradition and their culture; that it's not part of how they were brought up.

## **6.3 Audience development in Johannesburg**

### **6.3.1 Communication and community engagement**

On the question of what can be done to ensure that there is a synergy between audiences and theatres in Johannesburg, the findings found ways that are relevant in developing audiences in Johannesburg. The findings indicate that communication is an effective way of audience development. This is associated with the findings of the Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) which stated that one needs to consult and involve audiences e.g. community members and stakeholders, when one needs to attract and retain audiences. The findings in this study states that communication means staying in touch with your target audience by calling them and inviting them to come see the shows, and by forming a relationship with them. This means forming a communication channel that will enable a rich interaction between you and your audiences in all fields. It summarizes that one need to communicate effectively with the audience because that shows your interest in them and how they are thinking and how they can contribute to certain extend in your organisation.

### **6.3.2 Research**

Another effective way of developing audiences that was expressed in the study is the process of audience's research, which seeks to understand audiences in a broader way. This study indicates that audience research is about going deeper in trying to know the demographics and the geographic of your target audiences. This means taking time to talk to them and understanding what makes them come to buy tickets for shows. Therefore, there is a need to look at who is attending and also find possible reasons why they are attending and if they are not attending, one need to find out why and target them specifically. This results, however, is confirmed by the Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) study which differently outlined that organizations needs to develop questions that seeks to ask audiences about what interest them through workshops, focus groups or meetings. The difference in this context can be explained due to the fact that audience research can be conducted in different ways; depending on what your research aims or objectives.



### **6.3.3 Accessibility**

The findings revealed that accessibility is significant in developing audience. In this study, accessibility simply mean providing access to your audiences by making sure that they have access to facilities and resources to young people and artists in Johannesburg, bombarding people with interesting activities that will make them want to come to theatre, and creating an environment for those who already attend theatre. This confirms the findings of the study of the Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) that when developing audiences one needs to improve his or her organisation by providing access to the site -This makes it easier for audiences to explore and browse around the organizations because they know that they can freely access it and enjoy at the same time.

### **6.3.4 Awareness**

Awareness is an important aspect in developing audiences in Johannesburg. Creating awareness means exposing theatre to the community by giving them the opportunity to experience theatre in places they are familiar and comfortable with. In this way, you are constantly taking theatre to the people and putting shows in places like community centres, community hall, hospitals, churches, schools and so on. These are places that are close to the people and places that people can relate to. This finding agrees with the previous study of the Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) which focused on taking heritage to the audiences by putting displays offsite in the community. It is through awareness that one can now begin to create an impact in the community, which will stimulate the idea of what theatre is in people's minds and also create a good impression of what theatre is in the community.

### **6.3.5 Education**

Education is an integral part of intellectual development. It creates awareness and also exposes audience to theatre where they are able to develop an understanding of what theatre is. The findings of this study revealed that theatre education should be provided in schools whereby children are able to learn about theatre. One theatre expert expressed that the most fundamental audience development start with children. You begin to work with them in an early age to develop their understanding in that way they start understanding theatre as some kind of a language. As a result, the study suggests that organizations need to take theatre to the schools.

This is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) that there need to be a partnership with teachers to develop school programmes. The explanation of the results is due to the observation that there is lack of theatre/art education in schools in South Africa. In this case, the study found that there is a need for more theatre education in South Africa, in order to expose audiences to theatre in Johannesburg.

**Table 1: Tools of audience development**

1. Monitoring and evaluation
2. Audience research
3. Relationship
4. Education
5. Awareness
6. Networking

#### **6.4 Monitoring and evaluation**

The study has revealed that monitoring and evaluation is a helpful way of audience development. Monitoring and evaluation in this sense refers to the process of monitoring the performance of the organizations and checking if it has achieved the set goals and aims it has planned to achieve. In the view of Johannesburg, monitoring and evaluation involves looking at who is coming to theatre and who is not coming and also finding out why they are not coming. That in itself means that you monitor and evaluate audiences performance in attending theatre to see if you are able to reach your target market and how many you have reached so far. This step is expressed differently by the Heritage Lottery Fund as the process of reviewing and analysing (HLF, 2010)

#### **6.5 Research**

Audience research is another tool of audience development that was revealed in the findings. The study indicated that it is important to conduct an audience research in order to get to know your audiences, their demographics, as well as where they come or where they live. This refers to the

process of checking the number of people attending theatre shows and those who do not attend and also understanding what aspects of theatre excite them, what they like, and how do they respond to your theatre shows. This was reported also in the previous study of the Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) which demonstrated two of the methods of conducting research (qualitative and quantitative).

## **6.6 Building relationships**

The study also found the significance of establishing a relationship with your audience as a useful tool to develop new and existing audiences. Relationship building signify that one need to constantly be in touch with audiences by engaging with them and making them understanding the language of theatre. Forming a partnership with sponsors and institutions where audiences can benefit from. Building a relationship mean that you form a bond with your audiences that is tied with same values and that you become obsessed with your audience to the extent that when they are no longer showing up in your events, you develop a need to find them and try to understand the motives behind them not showing up anymore. Meaning you also build it based on trust, commitment and loyalty. As such, the findings of this study is in union with the preceding study which showed that relationship is built through follow up, communication, partnership and collaboration with other institutions, appreciation and consultation with audiences. In this effect, one may assume that audiences in Johannesburg respond positively to theatre when appreciated and knowing that they are the first priorities for the theatre.

## **6.7 Education**

Another tool that was revealed and supported by the literature is education. Literature indicated that it is significant to educate artists and audiences (HLF, 2010). However, education in this study means that theatre needs to be taken to school in order to develop audiences in an early age. In this essence, education is the beginning of knowledge and knowledge stimulates awareness. And in order to make people aware of theatre in Johannesburg, theatre needs to be taken to schools, and the community, so that people will be exposed to theatre. The suggestion of this tool can be enlightened due to the fact that the majority of people in Johannesburg are unaware that theatre exists. And it is through educated that they can begin to know of the existence of theatre.

## **6.8. Reaching audiences**

### **6.8.1 Networking**

Networking is perceived to be an additional tool for audience development in this study. The findings disclosed that involving other tools that have to do with technology and social networking is relevant. This refers to the use of telephones, emails, SMSes, Television, Radio stations, and newspapers. In addition, this is corroborated by an earlier study, which indicated that you should market what you offer by using technology and social networking (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2010). Different from the above tools, the study has found that word of mouth is the most effective tool of developing audiences in Johannesburg because audiences are influenced by what they hear from their friends and families. In contrast to the already existing knowledge in the literature of this study, the findings revealed that one could develop audience by building a database of people who come to the theatre and then develop strategies to attract more people.

### **6.8.2 Social Media and Crowdsourcing**

Crowdsourcing has emerged as a useful tool that is taking over the process of engaging with online communities and reaching audiences from different countries. This study has established Crowdsourcing as a new tool of assisting organisations to develop and grow their products while in the other hand getting help from other sources such as communities or the society. This tool is perceived to be helpful in every field of profession and many organisations have used it to develop or start projects that address political, economic, and social issues in South Africa. The paper has provided examples of Crowdsourcing sources such as Thundafund (which is concerned with helping individuals or organisation to get funds for their projects) and Evly (which helps organisations connect with their community to develop new products). The study further established that using Crowdsourcing is very helpful in developing audiences and one need to constantly be in touch with the audiences through the use of social media such as blogs, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google + and other social networking sources.

## **6.9 Government policies**

In the question, how effective have government policies being on audience development? The study demonstrated that government has very beautiful policies; however, they are not implemented. In addition, this in turn shows how theatres are given less support in promoting theatre or art and culture in South Africa.

In addition, literature suggested solutions with regards to audience development that seek to answer the research question of this study. Wiggins (2004) put forward that models such as the RAND model and the MAO model of audience development has contributed in the success of building audience internationally over the years. But one cannot assume that applying these models in South African context can be helpful. In this case, it is worth taken into consideration.

## **7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This research has clearly demonstrated audience's motives in attending theatre in Johannesburg; and it further highlighted the motives of lack of theatre attendance in Johannesburg, which in turn indicated possible ways to develop audiences in Johannesburg. The research aimed at answering the research question; what motivates audience in attending theatre in Johannesburg or lack interest to attend? Based on the research question, it has supported previous studies that focused on audience motives in theatre attendance. Literature and the findings of this study emphasized that audiences go to theatre for social satisfaction (entertainment, fun, enjoyment, experience and socialization), spiritual and personal satisfaction (escapism, mind relieve, stress relieve, behaviours, taste and attitudes). The research prioritized influence of family and friends, familiarity (knowledge of theatre) and education as other factors that have an impact on why people go to theatre in Johannesburg.

This study revealed that audiences in Johannesburg lack interest in theatre due to familiarity, economy issues, perceptions they have about theatre, insufficient theatre education, competition, personality and location (where theatre is developed). The findings are therefore supported by previous studies presented in the existing literature for this field. However, the study discovered other factors that were not detected in the literature. The factors are associated with isolation (a

feeling of not belonging), environment (being unwelcoming), race and ethnicity, content, and poor theatre management (in terms of marketing and advertising).

Given the motives of theatre attendance and lack of attendance in Johannesburg, this research indicated the significance of developing audiences. This was achieved by establishing ways that are effective to attract and develop audiences and indicting tools that are useful to develop audiences today. The study established new audience development sources such as Crowdsourcing, use of social media to outsource audience as useful in developing new audiences in the current time. The findings produced results that corroborate with the findings of the Heritage Lottery fund, which stipulated communication, audience research, accessibility, awareness, impact, and education, theatre for development and participatory theatre as ways of developing audiences. Awareness, monitoring and evaluation, audience research, building relationship, education, and networking were revealed to be effective tools of audience development.

## **8. How the research added to what is known about the subject**

The findings of this study added a room for further research exploration because it gave the inside information of how audiences in Johannesburg viewed theatre, responded to it and also understood it. Due to this, the study established the effectiveness of audiences' motivation in Johannesburg and how it can build or destroy theatre programmes. It added to the knowledge that exist in the study, by shedding a light in the state of theatre in Johannesburg and adding knowledge to some of the aspects that were unnoticed about the process of developing audiences in Johannesburg..

## **9. Limitations of the study**

Lack of data on audience's motives in theatre and audience development in a local context has restricted the study in understanding audience development in the context of South Africa. As a result, this has contributed in the study providing thick information and a weak data based on audience development in Johannesburg. This is because more audience development studies are based in international perspective. In this case, the researcher had to dwell on people's

perspective and understanding of what audience development is. But the limitation provided a gap for more information to be researched in the future. It thus, provided a learning curve about how theatre attendance and audience development are not taken seriously.

## **10. Implications and Recommendations**

This section seeks to provide recommendations in order to improve theatre attendance in Johannesburg and also develop theatre audiences and non-attenders. Recommendations will be provided to theatre organizations in improving their theatre audience development and also theatre management. This study therefore suggests five areas in which organisations should pay attention to when conducting audience development.

### **10.1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **10.1.1 Crowdsourcing**

Crowdsourcing is an essential tool that this study has found to be helpful in audience development in theatre. The study therefore recommends that organisations consider ways of developing, engaging the audiences and communicating with the audience by using the new form of Crowdsourcing. For organisations with advantages of internet connections, they should explore what the internet has to offer in terms of funding for their project, getting feedback from the community and support from the community. Visit Crowdsourcing sites in order to find out how you can establish your ideas for a new business or community programmes (e.g. Thundafund.com).

#### **10.1.2 Take advantage of Facebook, Google +, LinkedIn, Blogs, Twitter, Flickr, and others**

With social media taking over the world in terms of allowing audiences to connect to each other, the study recommend that organisations take advantage of using social media. Social media will help you connect to your audiences and other professionals who share the same interest as yours. It also enables you to crowdsource, for example, through Facebook statuses, twitter, Facebook pages, LinkedIn groups, and so on.

### **10.1.3 Make use of community business places**

It is also helpful to consider taking your theatre organisations (productions/projects) to places that the communities are connected to. Some places such as, coffee shops, pubs, clubs around Johannesburg usually offer artists to showcase their works for free. In this case, this can serve as a platform for you to promote your brand and develop audiences

### **10.1.4 Audiences**

As theatre managers, we ought to keep in mind that we are not creating theatre for ourselves, but for audiences. As a result a careful attention to audiences is vital in this case. Therefore, it is recommended that organizations take initiatives to know their audiences and also show interest in their lives by getting them involved in the organisation; and inviting them to their organisation through personal contact using emails.

### **10.1.5 Marketing.**

It is recommended that organizations have an effective marketing and improve their marketing strategies in order to attract more audiences in Johannesburg. This can be achieved by identifying people and finding out from them what makes them come or do not come to theatre and there after begin to develop strategies to get them in the theatre. The important thing is to take theatre to where people are. Market the audience based on what they like, need and desire.

### **10.1.6 Education.**

This study has found that theatre education adds to the reason why people do not go to the theatre in Johannesburg. For this reason, the study recommend that the government make theatre education part of the school curriculum; so that children and young people will have an opportunity to learn more about theatre and be able to be exposed to it. This means that there is a need to have a state of change to introduce theatre at a grassroots or primary level.

### **10.1.7 Government Policy**

It is recommended that a policy needs to be established; that will support audience development in South Africa and it also needs to be implemented in order to for it to work.



### **10.1.8 Audience development**

There is a need to create more theatre exposure in Johannesburg; where all people will be aware of it at all levels and an impression where adults may also understand the importance of it. To also have theatre shows that are of good quality that will stimulate people's interest and reduce ticket prices for people who cannot afford to buy it.

The most important recommendation is to put theatre where people are located and can easily access. In addition, the city of Johannesburg needs to put more initiatives to provide public transportation that will take this audience to and from the theatre. This can also be done by improving road securities so as to ensure safety in the streets.

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